NATION

Clashes in Odisha dist over post; internet shut

≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS

Int'l investments surge record high with ₹23K crore inflows

≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS

WADA seeks long ban for world No. 1 Jannik Sinner

≫ Page: 8 ≪

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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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Hezbollah chief Nasrallah killed by archenemy Israel

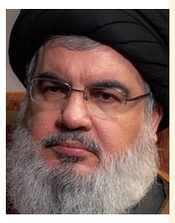
Reports indicated that his daughter Zainab was also killed

BEIRUT, 28 SEPT

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, who transformed the Lebanese militant group into a potent paramilitary and political force in the Middle East, was killed in an Israeli airstrike, the group said. He was 64.

Nasrallah, who spearheaded Hezbollah's war against Israel in 2006 and got the group heavily involved in neighbouring Syria's brutal conflict, was killed in a massive Israeli airstrike on the Beirut southern suburb of Haret Hreik on Friday that knocked down several multi-story apartment buildings.

Earlier reports indicated that Nasrallah's daughter, Zainab, was also killed.



Hassan Nasrallah
PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

WHO WAS HASSAN NASRALLAH?

- Nasrallah—the eldest of nine siblings—was born into Beirut's vegetable vendor's family in 1960.
- Age: 64 yrs
- After Lebanon's 1975's civil war, he joined Amal movement (Shia militia).
- In 1982 (after Israel invaded Lebanon) he formed Hezbollah along with Iran's Revolutionary Guards.
- In 1992, he was appointed Hezbollah's leader and he forged a close bond with Iran.
- The Lebanese cleric turned the group into a formidable force and a major regional player.
- He won a war against Israel, pushing it to withdraw forces from Lebanon after an 18-year occupation in 2000.
- Nasrallah also helped expand Hezbollah beyond the borders of Lebanon.
- The group was instrumental in protecting the government of President Bashar al-Assad in Syria when it was threatened by a popular uprising in 2011.

Fears of a regional war

Nasrallah's death comes amid a dizzying escalation in the nearly yearlong conflict between Israel and Hezbollah, since the war in Gaza started, and more than three decades after he took leadership of the Iranian-backed militant group following the killing of his predecessor by an Israeli missile in 1992. Five years later, the United States designated Hezbollah a terrorist organization. Hezbollah has been firing rockets, missiles and drones into northern Israel in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza.

This week has been the deadliest in Lebanon since the bruising 2006 monthlong war between Israel and Hezbollah.

Israeli strikes on Lebanon killed more than 700 people in five days. Seen by his supporters as a charismatic and shrewd strategist, Nasrallah had reshaped Hezbollah into an archenemy of Israel, cementing alliances with the ayatollahs in Tehran and Hamas.

Idolised by his Lebanese Shiite followers and respected by millions of others across the Arab and Islamic world, Nasrallah held the title of sayyid, an honorific meant to signify the Shiite cleric's lineage dating back to the Prophet Muhammad, the founder of Islam.

Despite the power he wielded, Nasrallah lived largely in hiding in the last years of his life for fear of an Israeli assassination, giving speeches to followers via a satellite link.

A fiery orator viewed as an extremist in the US and much of the West, as well as in some oil-rich Gulf Arab countries, he was also considered a pragmatist, compared to the firebrand militants who dominated Hezbollah after its founding in 1982, during Lebanon's civil war. Under Nasrallah, Hezbollah fought Israel to a stalemate during the 34-day war in 2006 and was credited with leading the war of attrition that led to the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon in 2000, after an 18-year occupation. Nasrallah's eldest son, Hadi, was killed in 1997, while fighting against Israeli forces. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 6

Govt exempts non-basmati rice from export duty

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

Withdrawing a blanket ban on overseas shipments of non-basmati white rice, the government on Saturday imposed a floor price of USD 490 per tonne and exempted the commodity from export duty. Exports of non-basmati white rice have been banned since 20 July, 2023 to boost domestic supply. "The export policy for non-basmati white rice (semi-milled or wholly milled rice, whether or not polished or gazed) ...is amended from prohibited to free, subject to MEP (minimum export price) of USD 490 per tonne," the directorate general of foreign trade said. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 7

Mumbai on high alert amid terror threat

MUMBAI, 28 SEPT

Mumbai police have heightened security across crowded areas following intelligence from central agencies about a potential terror threat. Security measures have been intensified at religious sites and busy public spaces throughout the city. All senior police officials have been asked to pay special attention to security arrangements in their jurisdiction. Police on Friday conducted mock drills at places like Bhaucha Dhakka, Barkat Ali Road, Iskcon temple in Juhu, and Zaveri Bazar to check their security preparedness in the country's financial capital, which has experienced terror attacks in the past. All temples in the city have been asked to remain vigilant and report suspicious activities. *—PTI*

2 terrorists killed, 1 cop dead after two encounters in J&K

SRINAGAR, 28 SEPT

Two unidentified terrorists were killed and five security personnel, including an officer, sustained injuries in an encounter in Jammu and Kashmir's Kulgam district, police said on Saturday.

Meanwhile, a Jammu and Kashmir Police head constable was killed and an assistant sub-inspector was injured on Saturday evening during an encounter between security forces and terrorists in a remote village in Kathua, officials said.

A gunbattle broke out in Adigam village in the Devsar area of the district after security forces launched a cordon-and-search operation there early in the morning. In the early exchange of fire, Additional Superintendent of Police (Traffic) Mumtaz Ali suffered minor injuries due to a stray bullet near the encounter site, officials said. *—PTI*

Four soldiers and a cop were injured in an anti-terror operation in Jammu and Kashmir's Kulgam, on Saturday *PHOTO: PTI*

Udhayanidhi Stalin appointed TN's DyCM

CHENNAI, 28 SEPT

Tamil Nadu Governor RN Ravi on Saturday approved Chief Minister MK Stalin's recommendations on a cabinet reshuffle that included the elevation of his son Udhayanidhi as deputy CM and saw the return of V Senthil Balaji to the council of ministers, two days after Supreme Court granted him bail in a money laundering case.

Further, three ministers, including Mano Thangaraj who held the Dairy Development portfolio, have been dropped.

Besides Balaji, Dr Govi Chezhiaan, R Rajendran and SM Nasar have been inducted. Balaji had resigned in February this year, months after being arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a cash-for-jobs scam.

According to a Raj Bhavan release, Stalin "recommended to the Governor of Tamil Nadu (Ravi) to allot the portfolio of Planning and Development to Thiru Udhayanidhi Stalin, Minister for Youth Welfare and Sports Development, in addition to his existing portfolios and be designated as Deputy Chief Minister." The swearing-in ceremony will be held on Sunday at 3.30 pm. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

J&K UT STATUS IS TEMPORARY: PM

JAMMU, 28 SEPT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said the decision to transform Jammu and Kashmir into a Union Territory is "temporary" and the BJP-led government will restore the statehood to the region.

Launching a scathing attack on the opposition Congress, National Conference (NC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), he accused them of 'inflicting wounds' on the people by depriving them of their rights. The prime minister said it is the BJP, which has ended discrimination and is providing balm on the wounds of the victims of the three families. Escalating his attack, the prime minister said the "Congress, NC and PDP are annoyed by the changes in Jammu and Kashmir because they do not like your development". *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

'HYPOCRISY OVER TERROR'

India schools Pak after Shehbaz's Kashmir remark

UNITED NATIONS, 28 SEPT

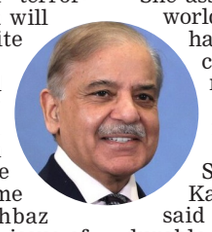
In a strong retort, India has slammed Pakistan in the UN General Assembly, saying its "fingerprints" are on terrorist incidents across the world and the country should realise that cross-border terrorism against India will "inevitably invite consequences".

India exercised its Right of Reply in the UN General Assembly on Friday in response to Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif raising the issue of Jammu and Kashmir in his address at the General Debate of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly.

"A country run by the military, with a global reputation for terrorism, narcotics trade and transnational crime has had the audacity to attack the world's largest democracy," First Secretary in India's Permanent Mission to the UN Bhavika Mangalanandan said, delivering India's Right of Reply.

She asserted that as the world knows, Pakistan has long employed cross-border terrorism as a weapon against its neighbours.

In his address, Sharif raised the Kashmir issue and said that to "secure durable peace", India should reverse the Abrogation of Article 370 and enter into a dialogue for a "peaceful" resolution. He said India has spurned Pakistan's proposals for a mutual "Strategic Restraint Regime". *—PTI*



UN expert seeks intervention over 'bulldozer justice' in India

United Nations Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing Balakrishnan Rajagopal told Supreme Court that the state-drivendemolition of homes and commercial establishments is an "aggravated form of human rights violation". He has sought the top court's permission to intervene in the 'bulldozer demolition' case scheduled on 1 October.

Who is Bhavika Mangalanandan?

Indian diplomat Bhavika Mangalanandan took the internet by storm as schooled Pak PM Shebaz Sharieff over his Kashmir remarks and called out the neighbouring nation's "hypocrisy" over terrorism. Here is all you need to know about her

- The 31-year-old serves as India's Permanent Representative to the UN.
- Mangalanandan is a 2015 batch IFS officer and worked at the MEA as an Under Secretary.
- She has a Master's degree in Energy Studies from IIT-Delhi
- She currently serves as the 1st secretary of counter-terrorism and cyber security, 1st Committee (Disarmament and International Security), GA coordination, India at UN (Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations, New York).

DOCS CAN CHOOSE NO LIFE SUPPORT FOR TERMINALLY ILL PATIENTS

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

Union Health Ministry on Saturday released new draft guidelines on passive euthanasia stating that doctors should take a "considered decision" on withdrawal of life support in terminally ill patients on the basis of certain conditions including a documented informed refusal by the patient or their kin.

These guidelines allow doctors to stop life support for terminally ill patients under certain conditions. The conditions include: The patient has been declared brain-dead, the patient's disease is advanced and there is no chance of recovery and the patient or their family has refused to continue life support. The Union Ministry has invited feedback from the stakeholders by 20 October.

Meanwhile, Indian Medical Association National (IMA) President Dr RV Asokan said that the guidelines expose doctors to legal scrutiny and puts them under stress. *—PTI*

IN CHHATTISGARH

Govt nod to Adani mine despite NGT rejection

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

Centre approved a coal mining project operated by an Adani Group company in Chhattisgarh's Raigarh district, just six months after the National Green Tribunal (NGT) revoked its environmental clearance, directing the Environment Ministry to reexamine the case from the stage of the public hearing.

The Rs 7,465-crore coal mine project, which will affect 14 villages in the Gare Palma area of Tamnar tehsil, belongs to the Maharashtra State Power Generation Company (Mahagenco), with Gare Palma II Collieries Pvt. Ltd., an Adani Group company, as the mine developer and operator.

PHOTO: PTI

The environmental clearance has been granted despite studies highlighting serious concerns about the project's impact on the socio-economic and health conditions of villagers, hydrology, and carrying capacity, suggest government records.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh criticised the Centre for granting clearance again despite the NGT having previously quashed the earlier approval.

According to the minutes of the 13th Expert Appraisal Committee (coal mining sector) meeting, the Ministry had granted environmental clearance to the project on 11 July, 2022, which was subsequently challenged in the National Green Tribunal's Bhopal bench. On 15 January this year, the tribunal quashed the environmental clearance, citing concerns related to the public hearing conducted on 27 September, 2019, the carrying capacity study, the hydrology study, and non-consideration of a report on health impacts.

As things stand now, the project is well on its way – spread over more than 2,580 hectares, an area as big as one hundred Narendra Modi stadiums. It will displace 2,245 families in 14 tribal-dominated villages in Tamnar block, which is a Fifth Schedule area under the Constitution which grants it an additional layer of protection from land acquisition for projects. *—PTI*

Cong promises 7 guarantees in Haryana

CHANDIGARH, 28 SEPT

The Haryana Congress on Saturday rolled out its detailed poll manifesto for the 5 October State Assembly polls, making a host of promises, including setting up of a commission for farmers' welfare, Rs 2 crore for families of martyred soldiers, promoting labour-intensive units for generating employment and reconstitution of the Haryana Minority Commission.

Congress MLA Geeta Bhukkal said a farmers' commission will be formed for their welfare. Small farmers will be given diesel on subsidy and farmer diesel card will be issued for that, Bhukkal said.

A memorial for the farmers who died during the movement against the three now-repealed farm laws will be set up and a government job will be given to one family member of each farmer who died during the agitation, she said.

A total of 736 farmers who died during the stir will be given the "martyr" status, Bhukkal said. The creamy layer limit for the backward classes will be raised from Rs 6 lakh to Rs 10 lakh, Congress promised. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

Cong leaders during the announcement of guarantees *PHOTO: PTI*

PHOTO: X

Bomb threat to Taj West End hotel a hoax: Police

BENGALURU, 28 SEPT

The Taj West End Hotel in Bengaluru received a bomb threat via email from unknown individuals on Saturday, according to the police. However, the threat was later revealed to be a hoax. Following the threat, police deployed bomb disposal and anti-sabotage units to the hotel, which is frequented by political leaders, celebrities, and sports figures. The hotel staff promptly alerted the High Grounds Police Station, under whose jurisdiction the hotel falls. A bomb squad was dispatched to the scene, and a thorough search of the premises was conducted. Speaking to Salar News, a senior police official from the High Grounds Police Station said, "We received an email about a bomb threat this morning. The Bomb Detection and Disposal Squad (BDDS) and Anti-Sabotage Check (ASC) team conducted a thorough search of the entire hotel. After finding no explosive items, it was confirmed that the threat was a hoax."
—Salar News

Boy dies after alleged medical negligence

CHIKKAMAGALURU, 28 SEPT

A seven-year-old boy succumbed to what police have termed a case of medical negligence in the Chikkamagaluru on Saturday. The deceased, Sonesh, was a resident of Kenchapura village near Ajjampura town. According to police, Sonesh's parents, Ashok and his wife, rushed him to a private clinic after he developed a high fever. The doctor, Dr Varun, administered an injection to the child. However, Sonesh's condition worsened, and he developed blisters on his back.Alarmed, the parents took Sonesh to a private hospital in Shivamogga, but unfortunately, he died. The distraught parents have filed a police complaint against Varun at the Ajjampura police station, alleging medical negligence. They claim that an overdose of the medication administered by the doctor led to their son's untimely death. Speaking to **Salar News,** N Veerandra, police inspector of Ajjampura town station, said, "Initial investigations have revealed that Dr Varun holds a Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery (BAMS) degree. He is not authorised to administer injections to patients. We are awaiting the post-mortem report to determine if there was negligence on the doctor's part."
—Salar News

CM quizzes PM's silence on Hindenburg, Manipur

Alleging corruption, CM asks PM to correct things within BJP

MYSURU, 28 SEPT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Saturday questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi's silence on the Hindenburg report and the Manipur violence, as he hit back at the latter, for raising the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment case against him, to target Congress during poll campaign in Haryana.

Alleging that there are many corrupt people in BJP, he asked Modi to correct things within his party first.

"There are many corrupt people in his party (BJP). Let him correct it first. Why doesn't Narendra Modi speak about Hindenburg (report)? on Manipur? Why hasn't he visited Manipur? Rahul Gandhi (Congress leader and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha) has raised these issues. Why doesn't he speak on that?" Siddaramaiah asked in response to a question by reporters.

RESIGN?
I AM "NIRMALA SITHARAMAN"
ACCUSED OF ELECTION ILLEGAL BOND SCAM.
TAKE ACTION AGAINST YEDDYURAPPA, KUMARASWAMY, THE PERPETRATORS OF ILLEGAL
ACCUSED OF ELECTION ILLEGAL BOND SCAM.
ರಾಜೀನಾಮೆ

Congress workers protest against Union Ministers HD Kumaraswamy and Nirmala Sitaraman in Bengaluru on Saturday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

Targeting Congress over the issue of corruption, Modi, addressing a poll rally in Haryana's Sonipat on Wednesday, had cited an example of Congress-ruled Karnataka, saying Chief Minister Siddaramaiah was facing an accusation of land scam and even the high court has also stated that the probe against him was right.

Lokayukta police on Friday registered an FIR against Siddaramaiah and others in the MUDA case, following a Special Court in Bengaluru on Wednesday ordering a Lokayukta police probe against him.

CM demands FM's resignation in electoral bond

Siddaramaiah called for the resignation of Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman following a Bengaluru Court order to file an FIR against the Union Minister and other leaders for allegedly extorting money through the now scrapped electoral bonds.
—PTI

Does RaGa stand with accused No. 1 CM: BJP

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

Rahul Gandhi **PHOTO: PTI**

- BJP Spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi said that the case is an outcome of Siddaramaiah's own misdeeds, as he and his family abused government powers to acquire assets illegally

BJP on Saturday asserted that the registration of a case on several criminal charges, including corruption, against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has exposed Congress, as it noted that the FIR was lodged following a court order and central agencies had no role in it.

BJP Spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi told reporters that it is a rare case of a sitting chief minister being made an accused in a corruption case and has unmasked the "corrupt face" of Congress.

Siddaramaiah is the accused number one in the case, he said and took a swipe at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, asking if he stood with the chief minister accused of corrupt practices. Lokayukta police on Friday registered an FIR against Siddaramaiah and others in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment case, following the court order.

With Congress leadership accusing BJP of targeting the Chief Minister for political reasons, Trivedi noted that central probe agencies had no role in this FIR.

He claimed that the case is an outcome of Siddaramaiah's own misdeeds, as he and his family abused government powers to acquire assets illegally.

He said a Congress candidate in the Haryana Assembly polls had recently said that his party leaders will use power to enrich themselves and their relatives, and alleged that Siddaramiah had already been doing it.
—PTI

FRESH THREAT

6-7 ministers will have to resign if I release proof: HDK

Union Minister for Steel and Heavy Industries HD Kumaraswamy addressing a press meet at the D(S) party office in Bengaluru on Saturday. **PHOTOS: MOHAMMED ASAD**

BENGALURU, 28 SEPT

Hitting out at the Siddaramaiah-led government on a host of issues, including 'corruption', JD(S) leader and Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy on Saturday said if he released the documents in his possession, six to seven state Ministers would have to resign.

He claimed that Congress was trying to "fix" him in some cases after he began cornering the State in some alleged irregularities.

"Siddaramaiah accused (previous BJP government) of being 40 per cent commission government and came to power. This government is taking more than 40 per cent commission," Kumaraswamy asked.

Targeting him on the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment case, the JD(S) State President asked, "If he (Siddaramaiah) had no role in the Mysuru (MUDA) scam, then why are certain decisions being made by the cabinet hurriedly?" citing the government withdrawing general consent given to CBI to investigate cases in the State.

Accusing the government of bringing in a new kind of legal system in the State as per which arrests are being made in several cases just because someone gives a complaint, he said, "But in your (Siddaramaiah) case despite 48 hours, after the court issued directions, FIR was not registered."

Kumaraswamy had on Friday appeared before the Lokayukta police for questioning in connection with a land denotification case.

He alleged that wrong information was spread that Lokayukta had served him a notice, to divert the attention from MUDA case.
—PTI

Prohibitory orders in Mysuru amid Dasara celebrations

MYSURU, 28 SEPT

City Police Commissioner Seema Latkar on Saturday imposed prohibitory orders under Section 163 Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) in Mysuru, including the Chamundi Hills area, due to the ongoing controversy surrounding the Mahisha Dasara celebrations. The orders came into effect from midnight on 28 September till 6am on 30 September.

Public rallies and processions are restricted within the city following the orders. However, the Mahisha Dasara celebration committee has been allowed to hold the Mahisha Mandala Utsav at Town Hall and to offer floral tributes to the statue of Mahishasura. The orders do not apply to students and candidates appearing for competitive and other exams. Police had earlier rejected a request from Dalit organisations seeking permission for the celebration atop Chamundi Hills. Mysuru Dasara will take place from 3-12 October this year.
—Salar News

Defence Ministry to handover land for road widening: DKS

BENGALURU, 28 SEPT

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Saturday said the Defence Ministry has agreed to hand over 12.34 acres of land to Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), to widen the road from Lower Agaram to Sarjapur here.

He held discussions with Lieutenant General Basant Kumar Repswal, Commandant of Army Service Corps (ASC) Centre and College, at Vidhana Soudha.

"The Defence Ministry has agreed to hand over 12.34 acres of land to BBMP and has given an in-principal consent to handover another 10.77 acres of land to widen road from Lower Agaram to Sarjapur," Shivakumar, who is also in-charge Minister for Bengaluru Development, told reporters.

"This will help reduce travel time from M G Road to Bellandur from 1 hour to 5-8 minutes. The Chief Minister and I had submitted our request to the Union Defence Minister, " he said.

DK Shivakumar **PHOTO: PTI**

Noting that tender has already been called for the first stretch of 3.50 km at a cost of Rs 35 crore, the Deputy CM said, once the Defence Ministry hands over the remaining 10.77 acres of land, it would ease traffic from the City centre to the IT hub.

Further he said that the state government has also submitted an appeal to the Defence Ministry for two acres of land for the proposed tunnel road near Military Dairy Farm near Hebbal.

"We have really worked hard to acquire defence land for Bengaluru Roads. We had even submitted appeals to the Defence Minister and Prime Minister."
—PTI

'GANDHI NADIGE' TO BE HELD ON 2 OCTOBER

BENGALURU, 28 SEPT

The State government is planning a year-long series of programmes, starting with a 'Gandhi Nadige' (a walk) and a 'Pledge of Cleanliness' campaign on 2 October to commemorate 100 years since Mahatma Gandhi led the freedom struggle in Belagavi.

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said, "To mark the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti on 2 October, the government has planned a 1km walk and a cleanliness pledge across all districts, taluk centres, and municipal corporations in the state." The walk will begin at 9 am, from Gandhi Bhavan, and concluding at the Gandhi statue near Vidhana Soudha. 35,000 people have registered through the app.
—Salar News

BBMP's plan to feed stray dogs draws mixed reactions

BENGALURU, 28 SEPT

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's (BBMP) new initiative to feed stray animals in areas where food is scarce has attracted mixed reactions from residents and animal activists.

Speaking to **Salar News,** Anushka Yadav a member of PETA said, "This is a positive step, as feeding stray dogs can reduce their aggressive behaviour and encourage them to be more docile around humans. It could also foster greater tolerance toward strays. However, the medical assistance component needs to be carefully planned, with thorough surveys and execution."

However, many residents have expressed concerns about the practical implications of the initiative. Speaking to **Salar News**, Vinay Sharma, an IT professional and a resident of Koramangala said, "While I support helping strays, it's important to ensure proper hygiene and management of feeding spots to avoid any public health issues. Also, they have to make sure that those particular spots do not affect the common man."

Gayathri Dhanraj V, an RT Nagar said "It is great that the BBMP is taking action, but they must ensure that local communities are engaged in planning. We want to help, but we need to be part of the solution." Ravikumar V, a resident of Jayanagar, 4th Block, said, "Feeding strays is only a short-term solution. The BBMP should also focus on spaying and neutering to control the stray population. If their population is in control, they need not go for so much extra work to control strays."

As part of the implementation, the BBMP will open registration for animal lovers and volunteers who already feed stray dogs. The plan also includes strengthening resources to better assist community animals, especially in cases that require medical attention. For assistance, citizens can contact the BBMP helpline at 1533. *—Salar News*

CROOKS ON THE PROWL

Insta fraudsters use false ads as bait

DANIEL GEORGE
BENGALURU, 28 SEPT

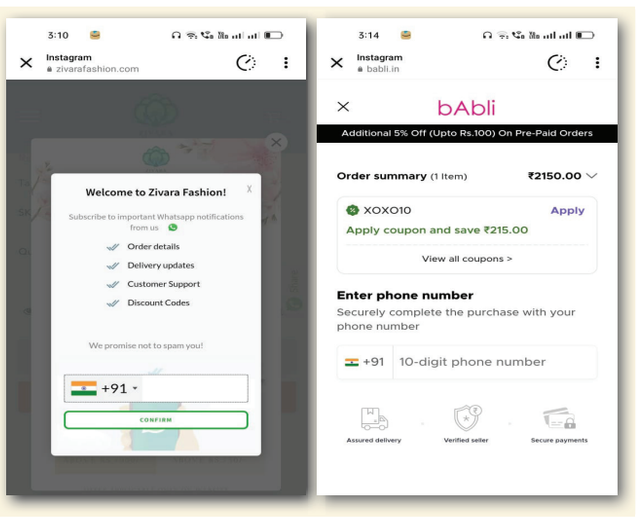
Smitha Rai (name changed), a native of Dakshina Kannada district, was thrilled when she stumbled upon a Bengaluru-based clothing store on Instagram. The store, called Riya Fashions, had over 15,000 followers and offered trendy clothes at prices lower than the market. Trusting the store, Rai placed an order and paid in advance since cash on delivery wasn't available. She was assured that her order would be delivered within 10 days. However, when the dress didn't arrive, she discovered that the Instagram account had been deactivated and the contact number was unreachable.

Rai's experience is not unique. An increasing number of Instagram users are falling victim to fraudulent online stores. According to the cybercrime portal (1930) under Karnataka Police, there has been a notable rise in such cases.

Many fall prey to these scams because Instagram stores often don't offer cash on delivery, forcing customers to pay in advance. "People fall prey to the reduced prices displayed on Instagram when compared to physical stores. Instagram is just a platform for advertising and does not guarantee the security of the payments made by the customer," CB Ryshyanth, Superintendent of Police (Wireless), told **Salar News**.

Fraudsters create fake pages of shopping outlets on social media platforms and run fake advertisements to attract targets.

"The targets pay via Google Pay, Paytm or Phone Pe accounts linked to SIM cards with fake names and addresses making it difficult for police to trace them," Ryshyanth said.
—Salar News



Here are screenshots of two fake accounts on Instagram that have duped people **PHOTO: SALAR**

Beware while shopping

Instagram ads aren't always scams, but some types to watch out for include:

1. Counterfeit products: Low-quality imitations of well-known brands
2. Fake products: Scammers redirect users to suspicious websites where payments are made, but products are not delivered
3. Impersonation: Scammers impersonate established companies or create fake accounts to gain trust

How to avoid Instagram ad scams

1. Always opt for cash on delivery
2. Be cautious of ads using stolen images or branding from legitimate companies
3. Avoid making payments solely through credit, debit cards or UPI payments
4. Report suspicious sellers or ads on Instagram

State loses Rs 10 crore every day to cyber criminals, says police

DANIEL GEORGE
BENGALURU, 28 SEPT

State is losing an average of Rs 10 crore every day to cybercriminals, a significant jump from Rs 4 crore just three months before, according to an official with the cyber wing of State police. This increase is reflected in the surge in calls to the cybercrime helpline (1930), which now handles more than 400 calls per day, up from 275 calls two months ago.

One emerging trend among cybercrimes is fraud related to share trading, CB Ryshyanth, Superintendent of Police (Wireless) told **Salar News**. Scammers lure unsuspecting victims with deceptive links promising high returns. However, when victims attempt to withdraw their earnings, they realise they've been cheated.

A common trick used by fraudsters is to manipulate victims into believing that their Aadhar card has been misused to open bank accounts and that those accounts are involved in money laundering. Another modus operandi is to make the victims believe that they are involved in criminal acts and that the parcels they have sent through FedEx contain contraband. "Victims are subjected to psychological manipulation and coercion and in some cases, the victims are held physically or digitally hostage," a police official said.

In the last five years, Karnataka has recorded cybercrimes amounting to ₹592 crore, primarily involving job frauds and fake loan apps.
—Salar News

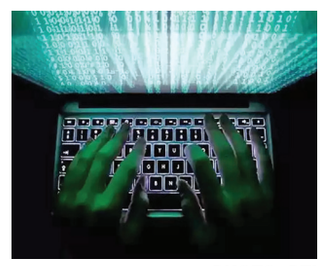


PHOTO: PTI

SIT raids properties of BJP MLA Munirathna

BENGALURU, 28 SEPT

Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing allegations against BJP MLA N Munirathna Naidu conducted raids at his residence in Vyalikaval and 15 locations across the City on Saturday. The SIT, operating under Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and led by ACP Kavitha, is investigating charges that include rape, honey trapping, and other offences.

Sources close to the investigation revealed that officials examined documents, electronic devices, and various materials related to the allegations.

This operation follows claims by one of the alleged victims, who accused Munirathna of videotaping the crimes and using the footage to blackmail not only her but also politicians and high-ranking IAS and IPS officials.

The victim alleged that Munirathna threatened her with harm to her son if she refused to comply with his demands.
—Salar News

PHOTO: ANI

Punjab CM Mann tests positive for leptospirosis

CHANDIGARH, 28 SEPT

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann was on Saturday diagnosed with bacterial infection leptospirosis, with doctors saying he is being given antibiotics. The 50-year-old AAP leader was admitted to the Fortis Hospital Mohali on Wednesday for a routine check-up. "At present, all vitals of the Chief Minister are completely stable. As suspected at the time of admission for tropical fever, his blood tests for leptospirosis came back positive," according to a heath bulletin issued by the hospital. It said the chief minister has already been put on appropriate antibiotics. "All clinical features and pathological tests have shown satisfactory improvement." According to the WHO, leptospirosis is a bacterial disease that affects both humans and animals. . *—PTI*

AAP to file plea in SC against 'illegal' MCD poll: Atishi

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

AAP will file a plea in the Supreme Court on Saturday against the "unconstitutional, illegal and undemocratic" MCD standing committee poll, senior party leader and Delhi Chief Minister Atishi said. BJP won the last vacant seat of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi's 18-member Standing Committee unopposed on Friday as the councillors of the ruling AAP and Congress boycotted the election. In a press conference, Atishi dared the BJP to get the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) dissolved and face the AAP in elections to see who the people want to rule the civic body. The rules allow only the mayor to fix the date and place of the MCD House meeting and only the mayor can preside over it, the chief minister said. *—PTI*

Kejri to vacate CM residence soon, hunts new address

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal will soon vacate the official residence of Delhi chief minister in the city's Civil Lines area, with an intensive search on for a new house near his New Delhi constituency, the party said on Saturday. Kejriwal, who resigned as Delhi chief minister earlier this month, said he would vacate the official Flagstaff Road residence during the Navratri period. The auspicious Hindu festival commences from the first week of October. With Delhi Assembly elections only a few months away, the AAP national convener is "keenly focused" on finding a property that will allow him to utilise his time and resources to the fullest, the party said. He is searching for a place that not only provides a base for his work but also allows him to travel and stay connected. . *—PTI*

M'rashtra polls: EC directs action against fake news

MUMBAI, 28 SEPT

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar on Saturday ordered a crackdown on fake news on social media in Maharashtra, where Assembly elections are due later this year, sources said. Reviewing the poll preparedness in Maharashtra along with fellow Election Commissioners Gyanesh Kumar and SS Sandhu, Kumar also directed police officers to speed up investigation in electoral offences filed in the State during the Lok Sabha elections earlier this year. The Election Commission, met district electoral officers (DEOs), superintendents of police, municipal commissioners, divisional commissioners and other senior officials of the State government. *—PTI*

J&K wants govt free of corruption & terrorism: Modi

'Every Bapu & Beta wants Haryana CM post'

JAMMU/HISAR 28 SEPT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with J&K BJP President Ravinder Raina during a public meeting in Jammu, on Saturday **PHOTO: PTI**

Jammu and Kashmir people are looking forward to a government free of "corruption, terrorism and separatism" for peace and a better future for their children, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Saturday and described the Congress, NC and PDP as the "biggest enemies" of the Constitution.

At a poll rally at MAM Stadium here ahead of the last phase of the assembly elections, he referred to the 2016 surgical strikes across the border and said, "The terror mentors know that if they do anything wrong, Modi will find them even in 'Pataal' (netherworld)."

Modi claimed at the rally that there was a massive enthusiasm among people for the BJP. "The people of Jammu and Kashmir, who have been at the receiving end of the rule of three families -- Congress, NC and PDP -- do not want them back."

"They do not want corruption, discrimination in jobs, terrorism, separatism and bloodshed. Instead, they want peace and a better future for their children," the prime minister said in his nearly 45-minute speech.

Meanwhile, Modi said stability is a far-fetched thing for the Congress because of its infighting and now everyone in the party is jostling among themselves to become chief minister in Haryana with "Bapu" (Bhupinder Singh Hooda) and "Beta" (Deepender Hooda) also the contenders.

Addressing a poll rally in Haryana, he recalled the days when he worked for party organisation in Haryana.

Haryana's mothers and sisters have given a slogan "Mahra Haryana-Non-stop Haryana" and Haryana's development should continue non-stop and that's why people have made up their mind to give chance for third time to BJP, Modi said. *—PTI*

BJP is using J&K to stir emotions in India: Priyanka

'Cong has a vision, we will restore statehood'

BISHNAH, 28 SEPT

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra addresses a public meeting for at Bishnah in Jammu district, on Saturday **PHOTO: PTI**

Congress will restore Jammu and Kashmir's statehood, party leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said on Saturday while she slammed BJP for using the Union territory as a pawn to "stir emotions" elsewhere in the country.

Gandhi, Congress's national general secretary, also criticised Lt Governor Manoj Sinha saying the current administration was a "puppet" government being run with a remote control.

"Congress party has a vision for you and for Jammu and Kashmir. We want to restore your state's status. If our government comes to power, we will immediately restore your statehood. We will also revive the tradition of the Darbar Move," Vadra told a public rally here.

BJP leaders have turned Jammu and Kashmir into a pawn in their political chess game as policies are not being made for the people of the region, she said.

> **Requesting all J&K voters to beware of individuals 'sent by Delhi', reject 'devils in disguise'**
>
> — Farooq Abdullah, National Conference President

Rahul Gandhi in Haryana said Congress' "incoming government" will end "the decade of pain" and the party has resolved to fulfill the hopes and aspirations of the people of the state.

In a post in Hindi on X, Gandhi alleged that in a decade, the BJP has snatched away Haryana's prosperity, dreams and power. Sharing a video of the "Dogri Dham with RG", Gandhi said on X that the frustration in the eyes of a young start-up owner from Jammu and Kashmir reflects the struggles of most entrepreneurs and owners in India. *—PTI*

Clockwise from top left: BJP supporters during a public meeting in Jammu; National Conference workers take part in a road show for J&K Assembly elections in Baramulla district, Jammu & Kashmir on Saturday; Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath with BJP leaders during a public meeting ahead of Haryana Assembly elections, at Faridabad on Saturday; AAP national convenor Arvind Kejriwal during a road show in support of party candidate from Pundri constituency Narendra Sharma for Haryana Assembly elections **PHOTO: PTI**

BJP calls RaGa 'liar' over remarks on Ram Mandir

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

- Asked "Naach-gana (dancing-singing) was happening there," the leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha said, addressing a poll rally on Ram mandir's inauguration ceremony

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi came under attack on Saturday for his "naach-gaana" comment on 22 January consecration ceremony of the Ram temple in Ayodhya, with the ruling BJP calling him a "liar of the highest order".

The saffron party also said Congress leader's comments show the Gandhi family's real nature and contempt for Hinduism.

The reaction of BJP came after a video clip of Gandhi went viral on social media, in which he is heard saying, "Amitabh Bachchan, Ambani and Adani were invited" to attend the consecration of the Ram temple but "no poor people, labourers or farmers" were called to attend the event.

"Naach-gana (dancing-singing) was happening there," the leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha said, addressing a poll rally in Haryana's Barwala on Thursday.

That is why BJP lost the Ayodhya Lok Sabha seat to the Samajwadi Party's Awadhesh Singh in the parliamentary election, the Congress leader said. *—PTI*

BJP allies with AJSU, JD(U) for J'khand polls

RANCHI, 28 SEPT

Himanta Biswa Sarma **PHOTO: PTI**

BJP will contest the upcoming assembly polls in Jharkhand in alliance with NDA partners AJSU Party and Janata Dal (United), Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced on Saturday.

Sarma, who is BJP's Jharkhand election co in-charge, said that the seat-sharing agreement with the allies is in the final stage.

" BJP will contest the Jharkhand elections in alliance with AJSU Party and JD(U). The seat-sharing agreement with the allies has been done on 99 per cent of the seats. Discussions are underway for the remaining one or two seats and it will be finalised soon," he said, while speaking to reporters in Ranchi.

Sarma said that a formal announcement in this regard will be made after 'Pitri Paksha', which ends on 2 October.

Elections to the 81-member assembly in Jharkhand are due later this year.

On Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren's letter to Union Health Minister JP Nadda seeking assistance for a detailed investigation into the death of aspirants who had appeared for physical tests as part of a recruitment drive to appoint excise personnel, Sarma said the probe should be done by the state government.

Fifteen aspirants reportedly lost their lives while undertaking physical tests during the recent drive. BJP has been attacking Soren's government over the deaths, alleging they were victims of administration's mismanagement. *—PTI*

Laddu row: YSRCP conducts atonement rituals for CM's 'sin'

AMARAVATI, 28 SEPT

YSRCP leaders and cadres across Andhra Pradesh conducted 'forgiveness' rituals on Saturday to 'atone' for the alleged 'sin' committed by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu by casting alleged aspersions on the sanctity of Tirupati laddus (consecrated sweet).

Naidu alleged during a recent NDA legislative party meeting that the erstwhile YSRCP government did not even spare Sri Venkateswara temple and used substandard ingredients and animal fats for making laddus.

The allegations sparked a massive controversy across the country, hurting the sentiments of crores of Hindus.

Following the nationwide uproar, YSRCP chief YS Jagan Mohan Reddy alleged that Naidu was blatantly lying about laddus and said that the alleged sacrilege did not occur at all while the ghee samples sent for testing were drawn under the NDA regime.

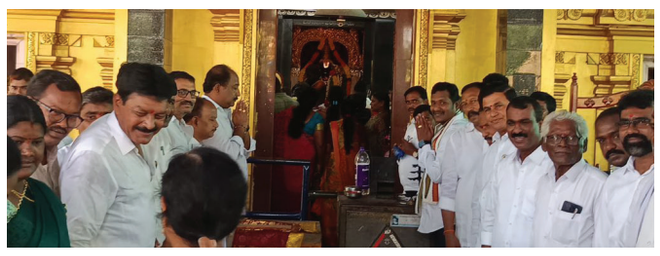
Consequently, Reddy called on his party cadres to undertake atonement rituals for undoing the alleged 'sin' committed by Naidu through his allegations.

Senior YSRCP leader and former Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) chairman B Karunakar Reddy participated in prayers at Gangamma temple at Tatayya Gunta in Tirupati.

Likewise, former irrigation minister Ambati Rambabu offered prayers at Venkateswara Swamy temple in Guntur, among others.

Speaking to a vernacular news channel, YSRCP leader M Sharmila Reddy, said, "Naidu dragged God also into politics and created a big ruckus out of an incident that never happened. I am asking one thing. Who was the chief minister when those ghee consignments (alleged adulterated ghee tankers) came?."

Opposing Naidu's allegations, several YSRCP supporters and activists conducted special poojas (rituals) in Eluru district. *—PTI*



On orders of party president YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, pooja was conducted at the Kanigiri Venkateswara Swamy temple **PHOTO: X@YSRCPDADDALA**

Vikramaditya Singh **PHOTO: FB**

VIKRAMADITYA: HAVE ASSUAGED CONG'S CONCERN

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

Himachal Pradesh Minister Vikramaditya Singh on Saturday said he has assuaged Congress high command's concerns about ideology following his recent remarks on the street vendors issue and termed as "misconception" the perception that Uttar Pradesh model was being followed in his State.

He said the multi-party committee formed by the Speaker in Himachal Pradesh would discuss all issues about street vending on 3 October.

Singh's remarks came a day after Congress top brass chided him over his remarks on mandatory display of names by the street vendors and told him that no one was allowed to go against the party's policies and ideologies.

Amid a row over the comments, Congress general secretary in-charge organisation KC Venugopal had a meeting here with Singh on Friday..

Reacting to it, Singh said, "I apprised Venugopal ji of the real situation and I assuaged his concerns about ideology and assured him that we are dedicated and loyal soldiers of the party and will not do anything which is against party line. I assured him that," said the PWD Minister.

"Any person can come to the State from anywhere. Himachal is an amazing part of India, any Himachali can go to any other State. But the street vending that is taking place, identification and verification, has to be done for which I have said there are High Court and Supreme Court directives," he said. *—PTI*

MEITEIS VS KUKIS

Shutdown in Manipur affects life; firing reported

The shutdown was imposed in protest against alleged atrocities of Meitei force and removal of Meitei from Kuki-Zo **PHOTO: X@CHONGLOI_KAYBIE**

IMPHAL, 28 SEPT

The shutdown in Manipur's Churachandpur and Kangpokpi districts affected normal life on Saturday, officials said. Markets and other commercial establishments remained shut, while vehicles stayed off the roads, they said. No untoward incidents have so far been reported, they added.

The shutdown began in the two districts on Friday and would continue till Sunday. The shutdown has been called by Kuki-Zo groups, including the Indigenous Tribal Leaders Forum (ITLF) and Kuki Students Organisation (KSO), in protest against Security Advisor Kuldiep Singh's statement.

Singh had on 20 September claimed that security forces have taken a number of steps in the wake of reports that "900 militants" might carry out violence in peripheral villages of Imphal valley districts.

Meanwhile, suspected militants fired at a village in Manipur's Jiribam district on Saturday, police said. Armed men fired indiscriminately at Mongbung Meitei village from nearby hilltops and surrounding thick forests prompting retaliation from village volunteers in the area, they said.

Security forces have been rushed to control the situation, he said, adding that no casualties have been reported so far.

A huge cache of arms and ammunition have been seized by security forces from three districts in ethnic conflict-hit Manipur, a police statement said on Saturday.

A joint team of Manipur Police and Assam Rifles seized two .303 rifles, one 9mm pistol with magazine, cartridges, four hand grenades, two detonators, and one each of country-made mortar and long-range improvised mortar from Loiching ridge in Kangpokpi district, it said. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Himachal student dies after fall from 3rd floor of hostel

SHIMLA, 28 SEPT

A student of Himachal Pradesh University died after allegedly falling from the third floor of the hostel here, police said on Saturday. The incident occurred on late Friday when Akhil, a first year law student hailing from Kinnaur district, fell from the hostel in Shimla's Summer Hill and was injured, they said. He was taken to the Indira Gandhi Medical College and Hospital by the students where doctors declared him brought dead, the police said. They said that the body has been sent for post mortem and an investigation is underway. Meanwhile, activists of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) staged a protest in the university campus and demanded that the meeting of the executive council of the university slated for Saturday be cancelled.—*PTI*

3 dead after blast at Sonipat 'illegal' cracker factory

CHANDIGARH, 28 SEPT

Two women and a child were killed, while nine others were injured in a blast at an "illegal" firecracker unit in a village in Haryana's Sonipat district on Saturday, police said. Workers and some of their family members were present at the site when the incident took place at the factory, located in Ridhau village, they added. The cause of the fire that led to the blast is being investigated, a police officer from Sonipat said. "Nine injured people have been taken to PGIMS Hospital in Rohtak," the officer said. The police officer said the chemical used in preparing firecrackers in the "illegal unit" appeared to have caught fire, leading to the blast. —*PTI*

2 killed, 4 injured in Chhattisgarh bear attack

PENDRA, 28 SEPT

Two people, including a 13-year-old girl, were killed and four others injured in separate incidents of attack by wild sloth bears in Chhattisgarh's Gaurela-Pendra-Marwahi (GPM) district, forest officials said on Saturday. While two incidents took place on Saturday morning, another occurred on Friday night in Marwahi forest division, known for the presence of a large number of sloth bears, they said. The girl, Vidya Kewat, came face to face with the bear when she went to graze her cattle in Beljharia village on Friday evening. The wild animal mauled her to death on the spot, said Raunak Goyal, Division Forest Officer Marwahi. In the same village, three local residents were attacked by a bear when they went to collect mushrooms in a nearby forest. —*PTI*

Leopard beaten to death for attacking jawan in UP

BIJNOR, 28 SEPT

A leopard was allegedly beaten to death in a village here for attacking a home guard jawan, a forest department officer said on Saturday. The incident occurred on Friday in Amannagar village. Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Gyan Singh said Homeguard Jawan Surendra had gone to a tubewell behind his house with his children – Disha, 20, Reshu, 14, and Deepanshu, 18, -- where the leopard was sitting on a mango tree. Upon seeing him, the leopard pounced on him and attacked him. Hearing the noises, the locals arrived at the scene and beat the leopard with sticks. It died on the spot, Singh said. Singh said that Disha caught the leopard's legs from behind and Reshu and Deepanshu struggled with the leopard for 10 minutes to save their father. —*PTI*

Clashes in Odisha dist over post; net shut

Clashes took place after cops stopped rally

Odisha suspended internet in Bhadrak for two days after a group of people pelted stones at police PHOTO: X

BHUBANESWAR / BHADRAK, 28 SEPT

- At least 14 platoons (1 platoon comprise 30 personnel) of police force have been deployed.

Odisha government on Saturday suspended internet service in Bhadrak for two days after a group of people pelted stones at police during a protest over an "objectionable" social media post.

According to a notification issued by the Home Department, the internet service will remain suspended in the district for 48 hours till 2am on 30 September

The government order also mentioned that the use and access of social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, X, and other medium of data services, mobile internet and broadband services will be prohibited to prevent the spread of inflammatory messages.

A group of people had lodged a complaint against a youth who allegedly posted some objectionable material on social media hurting the religious sentiments of a community. The members of a particular community took out a protest rally on Friday alleging delay in police action against the accused youth.

When police stopped the rally as it was held without prior permission of the administration, the protestors pelted stones at police in which two policemen were injured and the vehicle of Bhadrak Tehsildar was damaged, they said. A clash broke out between two communities in Santhia area of the district over posts on Friday. The violence later spread to Dhamnagar, police said. Meanwhile, the district administration on Friday imposed prohibitory orders under Section 163 of BNSS in Puruna Bazaar and Dhamnagar police station area to maintain law and order. At least 14 platoons (1 platoon comprise 30 personnel) of police force have been deployed in violence-hit Puruna Bazaar and Dhamnagar, police said.—*PTI*

DEHRADUN TENSE OVER INTERFAITH COUPLE'S MEET

DEHRADUN, 28 SEPT

Members of two communities hurled stones at each other and damaged two-wheelers as communal tension flared up after a 16-year-old Muslim girl was found with a Hindu man at the railway station here, an official said.

More than 100 people were booked on charges of stone-pelting and rioting on Thursday while a man belonging to a Right-wing outfit was detained for questioning in the vandalism outside the station. According to the police, the 21-year-old man and the girl hail from Badaun in Uttar Pradesh and were in a relationship. The girl allegedly fled home to meet the man who works in the Selaqui area near here, a police official said.

Upon reaching Dehradun, she called up the man who met her at the railway station in the night. Seen walking around at an odd hour, railway police staff quizzed them, the official said.

The police contacted the girl's parents and learnt that a missing complaint had been lodged by them at a police station in Badaun, he said.

However, as soon as the news of the duo roaming in the railway station spread in the area, members of the two communities gathered outside the station and a heated exchange of words ensued The situation escalated soon and the two sides hurled stones at each other and damaged some two-wheelers parked outside the railway station. —*PTI*

HP Hindu grps protest against Waqf Board

HAMIRPUR, 28 SEPT

Hundreds of people took out a rally in Himachal Pradesh's Hamirpur on Saturday under the banner of Devbhoomi Sangharsh Samiti, demanding abolishing the Waqf Board and verifying the identification documents of migrants to the state.

The organisation had given a call for a statewide protest over the issues.

Led by Surjeet Singh, the district president of the Devbhoomi Sangharsh Samiti and Ashish Sharma, the district chief of Bajrang Dal, the procession passed was attended by several people who waved saffron flags and banners. Police personnel were deployed in large numbers in the town to maintain law and order while shops owned by members of a minority religious community remained closed.

People take part in a protest demanding the abolishment of the Waqf Board in Hamirpur of Himachal Pradesh on Saturday PHOTO: ANI

Addressing the rally, the leaders of the organisation demanded that a proposal to check the documents of migrants to Himachal Pradesh be passed in the Gram Sabha meetings slated to be held across the state on 2 October.

They also accused the Congress government in the state of procrastinating over the Sanjauli mosque issue.

Hindu groups and locals have been demanding the demolition of an unauthorised portion of the mosque in Sanjauli. Leaders of the Devbhoomi Sangharsh Samiti warned the government not to take the issue lightly and help Hindus live peacefully in the state. —*PTI*

Man, 4 daughters found dead in Delhi's rented room

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

The decomposed bodies of a 46-year-old man and his four daughters, two of whom were differently-abled, have been found in their rented accommodation in southwest Delhi's Vasant Kunj area, police said on Saturday.

The bodies, discovered on Friday afternoon, did not have injury marks but police found three packets of celphos poison, five glasses and a spoon containing a suspicious liquid in the house. Police suspect a suicide pact.

While police said the man's two youngest daughters were differently-abled, neighbours claimed that all four were challenged. Police are verifying the claim, said Deputy Commissioner of Police Rohit Meena. Meena said the building's owner Nitin Chauhan was informed by the caretaker that a foul smell was coming from flat C-4 in Rangpuri village following which he knocked on the door but got no answer. With the help of a fire brigade team, police broke open the door and found a man lying dead in one room while the bodies of four women were found in the other room, the officer said. The deceased are Heeralal Sharma, who worked as a carpenter in the Indian Spinal Injury Centre in Vasant Kunj for the past 28 years, and his four daughters – Neetu, 26, Nikki, 24, Neeru, 23, and Nidhi, 20. —*PTI*

KERALA PAYS HOMAGE TO LORRY DRIVER KILLED IN K'TAKA LANDSLIDE

KOZHIKODE, 28 SEPT

PHOTO: PTI

Hundreds of people queued for hours to pay their last respects to Kerala lorry driver Arjun when his mortal remains were brought to his native village Kannadikkal in this district on Saturday.

Arjun, along with his vehicle, went missing in a river following a massive landslide that had rocked Shirur village in Uttara Kannada district in Karnataka in July. The body of the deceased youth and his lorry were recovered on Wednesday from the river, more than two months after the disaster, through a massive search mission. Emotional scenes were witnessed as the ambulance carrying the mortal remains of the youth entered Kannadikkal village, with his friends, neighbours, and fellow drivers bursting into tears. —*PTI*

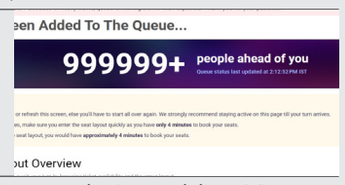
TICKET FIASCO

Coldplay concert sparks black market row

The highly-anticipated return of Coldplay to India is overshadowed by the alleged black market sales of concert tickets, which has led to police summoning Ashish Hemrajani, CEO of BookMyShow. Here is all you need to know about the row:

What happened?

- Tickets for Coldplay's 'Music Of The Spheres World' Tour went live at 12pm on 22 Sept.
- Just before the sale, Bookmyshow (BMS), the sole platform offering tickets, crashed.
- But as fans flocked to BMS they found lakhs of people ahead of them in queue (pic) and tickets were sold out in minutes.



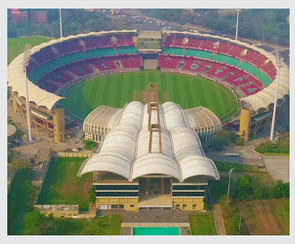
- At the same time, tickets were being sold on Viagogo (a multinational ticket exchange and resale platform) at 5 times the price.
- Netizens also called out BMS for its flawed queuing system, as people who logged in later were way ahead of those already waiting in the queue.

Prices of tickets on Viagogo

Section Level 2 O	₹1,06,487
Lounge	₹2,07,575
Section Level 1 A	₹8,66,673

Here is all you need to know about the row:

Concert on:
18, 19 and 21 Jan



Venue:
DY Patil Stadium, Navi Mumbai

Sena UBT demands probe

- Sena (UBT) alleged a "nexus engaging in the black-marketing" of tickets.
- They urged govt to start a probe and prevent such incidents.
- The black market sale has thwarted Coldplay's efforts to provide affordable tickets for their fans

Lawyer sues BMS

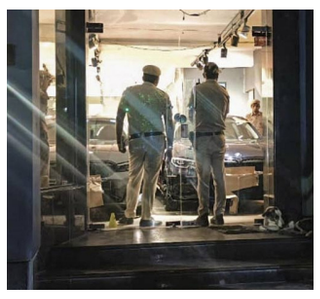
- Mumbai advocate Amit Vyas filed a case against BMS for facilitating the black market sale of tickets.
- Vyas alleges the tickets priced at ₹2,500, are being resold by third parties and influencers for ₹5 lakh.
- He alleges BMS manipulated the access by blocking users and forcibly logging them out and he feels the firm enabled bots and black-market operators.

TATA FACTORY BURNS

A major fire broke out at a Tata Electronics' chemical storage facility in Tamil Nadu's Hosur. Police claimed that there were no casualties PHOTO: PTI

Delhi gangsters open fire in public places

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT



Cops probe after assailants opened fire at a car showroom, in New Delhi on Friday night PHOTO: PTI

Hours after firing at a second-hand luxury car showroom in the national capital, two more incidents of firing have been reported, police said on Saturday.

While some unidentified shooters targeted a hotel at south Delhi's Mahilpalpur area early Saturday, some assailants opened fire at a sweets shop in Sultanpur Mor in Nangloi later.

No one was injured in the three firing incidents.

According to a police officer, around 9.30 am on Saturday, two men with their faces covered came on a bike and opened three to four rounds of fire at 'Roshan Halwai'.

Police suspect the shooting was related to protection money of some gangsters.

After the firing at the sweets shop, a note with "Deepak Boxer Bhai, Ankesh Lakra Bhai and Vishal Bhai" --the names of gangsters -- written on it, police said. CCTV footage has been collected and a probe was underway, they said. Earlier around 2.30 am, two men came on a motorcycle and fired around five to six bullets at the main entrance gate of Impress Hotel in south Delhi. Hotel staff and some guests were present in their rooms when the incident took place. —*PTI*

BIHAR BRACES FOR FLOODS AS DAMS RELEASE WATER

PATNA, 28 SEPT

The Bihar government has sounded an alert for floods along swollen Kosi, Gandak and Ganga rivers in northern and central parts of the State following the release of water from Valmikinagar and Birpur barrages on Saturday, a senior official said.

A total of 5.7 cusecs of water was released from Birpur Barrage on Kosi River till noon, the highest in the recent past, Santosh Kumar Mall, Principal Secretary of the state Water Resources Department told PTI.

Similarly, 4.20 lakh cusecs of water were released from Valmikinagar Barrage till noon. Following the heavy discharge of water from these two barrages, the excess river water entered low-lying areas in Jogapatti, Nautan, Gaunaha, Bagaha-1, Bagaha-2, Ramnagar, Majhaulia and Narkatiaganj blocks in West Champaran and several areas of East Champaran, officials said. An alert has already been sounded in several districts of Bihar as the IMD predicted heavy rain and warned of low to moderate flash flood risk in parts of the State. Heavy rain is likely in West and East Champaran, Sitamarhi, Sheohar, Muzaffarpur, Gopalganj, Siwan, Saran, Vaishali, Patna, Jehanabad, Madhubani and Bhojpur districts, IMD said. —*PTI*

LONG DRAWN BATTLE

16 years on, victims of 2008 Malegaon blast await justice

MUMBAI, 28 SEPT

Six people were killed when an explosive device strapped to a motorcycle went off near a mosque in Malegaon PHOTO: PTI

Sixteen years have passed since a blast rocked Maharashtra's Malegaon on a quiet September day in 2008, killing six people and injuring more than 100, and the trial in the case has just about reached the concluding stages.

While the prosecution has presented its final say in the case, the defence is likely to commence its closing arguments on 30 September.

However, for the victims and families who lost their loved ones, it has been a long-drawn battle for justice.

Six people were killed and more than 100 injured when an explosive device strapped to a motorcycle went off near a mosque in Malegaon on 29 September, 2008.

Lt Col Prasad Purohit, BJP leader Pragya Thakur- Major (retired) Ramesh Upadhyay, Ajay Rahirkar, Sudhakar Dwivedi, Sudhakar Chaturvedi and Sameer Kulkarni are facing trial under UAPA. —*PTI*

AI FLYER FINDS COCKROACH IN FOOD ON FLIGHT

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

An Air India passenger has complained of finding a cockroach in an omelette served onboard the flight from the national capital to New York, with the airline saying the matter has been taken up with the catering service provider for further investigation.

"We are aware of a social media post by a passenger regarding a foreign object in the onboard meal offered to them on AI 101 operating from DEL to JFK on 17 September 2024," an Air India spokesperson said in a statement and also expressed concern over the incident. "My 2-year-old finished more than half of it with me when we found this. Suffered from food poisoning as a result," she said. —*PTI*

BALANCING ACT

Zomato delivery partner Rachana carries her child on a bike as she delivers amid rain, in Rajkot, Gujarat
PHOTO: PTI

B'desh unrest: Hindus seek political representation

Hindu community leaders in Bangladesh are advocating for the formation of a dedicated political party, reflecting an urgent call for political representation to protect their rights and ensure their safety in an environment marked by instability and fear.

Hindu leaders from the Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council (BHBCOP) and other groups have been at the forefront of discussions about establishing a separate political party or demanding reserved parliamentary seats.

"There are currently three opinions that are being discussed in detail: first, going back to the separate electorate system from 1954; second, establishing a separate political party for Hindus; and third, reserving seats in Parliament for minorities," BHBCOP presidium member Kajal Debnath said.

In the wake of unprecedented violence and political upheaval in Bangladesh, the Hindu community -- the largest minority community in Bangladesh -- stands at a pivotal crossroads.

The turmoil began after the resignation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on 5 August following a student movement, a moment that triggered widespread protests and chaos.

Debnath said the data collected by the BHBCOP points to 2,010 incidents of attacks on the Hindu community, ranging from murder and physical assaults to sexual assaults, attacks on temples, and destruction of property.

Historically, Hindus made up about 22 per cent of Bangladesh's population during the 1971 Liberation War, but today they represent only approximately 8 per cent.

The community members attributed this decrease in the Hindu population to socio-political marginalisation and sporadic violence, intensifying the urgency for political mobilisation.

Debnath opined that forming a party for Hindus may not work in favour of minorities, as it might divide the secular votes and not result in victory.

Around 2,010 incidents of attacks on the Hindu community, ranging from murder and physical assaults to sexual assaults, attacks on temples, and destruction of property have been reported ***PHOTO: PTI***

"The Hindu population is scattered across Bangladesh. In some areas, it comprises 35 per cent of the voters, while in most places it is 6-8 per cent of the voters. Those Hindu leaders from the Awami League who won in the last election garnered both Hindu votes and votes from Awami League supporters of other communities."

Forming a political party prompts critical discussions about unity within the Hindu community, highlighting differing opinions on whether to collaborate with existing secular parties or to pursue an independent voice, all while striving to forge a cohesive identity that transcends internal divisions.

"We must focus on our common goals. Only by standing united can we make a significant impact. This is our moment to rise and reclaim our place in the political landscape. But as a large section of Hindus are identified with the Awami League, we too are facing attacks," said Gobinda Chandra Pramanik, also General Secretary of the Bangladesh Jatiya Hindu Mohajote.

The government has previously allocated seats for women in both national and local politics, and Hindu community leaders argue that similar reservations for Hindus would give them a platform to influence policies that directly impact their safety and rights.

Another presidium member of BHBCOP, stated that the political parties—whether the Awami League, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), or the Jatiya Party—have failed the Hindu minorities in the country since its birth.

Historically, the Awami League, recognised for its secular stance, received substantial support from the Hindu community, but the sudden power vacuum resulted in a wave of violence that disproportionately affected Hindus, leading to vandalised businesses, destroyed properties, and desecrated temples, leaving many in the community feeling vulnerable and disenfranchised.

Muhammad Yunus, the interim government's Chief Adviser, downplayed the severity of the violence against Hindus, characterising it as politically motivated rather than communal and suggesting that the attacks stemmed from political upheaval due to the perception that most Hindus supported the now-deposed Awami League regime. Yunus had described the attacks as "political in nature and not communal."Leaders of BHBCOP had met Yunus after he took charge on 8 August and submitted a memorandum requesting him to ensure the stopping of attacks on Hindus.

—PTI

SALAR ساہر

Gurugram reels under garbage crisis before polls

For residents of Haryana's Bandhwari village on the Gurugram-Faridabad border, home to one of the largest landfill sites in the country, elections mean politicians visiting the garbage hill for "photo-ops" and making "mountains of promises".

The locals, meanwhile, continue to struggle with contaminated water; diseases, including difficulty breathing; loss of business, and much more.

Since its inception in 2010, the Bandhwari dumpsite has become a major waste repository in the region, receiving more than 2,000 tonnes per day (TPD) of mixed waste -- 1,400 TPD from Gurugram and 600 TPD from Faridabad. Unfortunately, only a small fraction of the waste generated by the two cities is processed.

"In the last few years, during summer and monsoon, it became increasingly difficult to even sit outside our homes. If the wind blows from the dumpsite to the village, one can't even breathe. The waste has also contaminated the water in the area. From the dumpsite, it seeps into valleys and abandoned mines and contaminates the groundwater. We can't even bathe in the water that comes from the village borewells," Sumit Rawat, a villager, told PTI.

"Everytime there is an election, politicians come, take photos and announce that the dump would be removed but they are just mountains of promises," he said.

For Dharmveer Prajapati, who owns a petrol pump on the Gurugram-Faridabad highway, the landfill poses another challenge.

"Trucks full of garbage come here every day and cause traffic chaos. My staff has to keep their faces covered all the time because the air around is so poisonous," he said.

The ordeal is the same for dhaba owners on the highway that rarely get customers, unlike such eateries on other routes.

"There is a foul smell, mosquitoes and dust are everywhere, so people do not prefer to make a stop here. The situation has worsened in the past few years... It wasn't this bad earlier," said dhaba owner Virender Tanwar.

The landfill is not just a challenge for the villagers but for residents of the swanky apartment complexes nearby.

"It is like paying crores to wake up to a foul smell every day. We keep hearing in the news that the garbage dump will be removed soon but nothing changes on the ground," said Deeptiman, an apartment owner nearby.

The issue finds mention at the top of both BJP and Congress' Assembly poll manifestos.

BJP's Rao Narbir Singh -- a former Haryana minister contesting the elections from Badshahpur in Gurugram district -- said the height of the landfill had been significantly reduced and the waste was being treated.

Badshahpur is the largest constituency in the state in terms of the number of voters.

"The waste is being treated and it has been significantly reduced. I agree the city is a civic mess but the Bandhwari landfill has been on the government's agenda and measures are being taken," he said.

Singh blamed his party's coalition with the Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) between 2019 and 2024 -- a period when he was not in the government -- for the mess.

BJP and the Ajay Singh Chautala-led JJP formed an alliance in October 2019 that ended in March this year. JJP leader Dushyant Singh Chautala was deputy chief minister in the alliance government.

"I blame the coalition for it (Gurugram's civic problems). We had a majority government from 2014 to 2019 and anyone could see the pace of development but things went downhill since 2019. It was our coalition with the JJP that is to be blamed," Singh said.

"The civic infrastructure department was with the JJP and they didn't do anything. The people are disappointed that despite the BJP being at the helm of affairs, no work was done," he added.

Singh held the public works department and the forest portfolios in the first term of the Manohar Lal Khattar government from 2014 to 2019. He was denied a ticket by the BJP in the 2019 Assembly polls.

Congress' Badshahpur candidate Vardhan Yadav -- making his electoral debut -- said the landfill had been ignored by the BJP despite being in power in the state for 10 years.

According to Municipal Corporation of Gurgaon (MCG) Commissioner Narhari Singh Bangar, the landfill's height had been reduced from 50 metres to less than 23 metres in the past two years.

While the MCG assured the tribunal that it would stop dumping fresh waste at Bandhwari as part of the action plan, fresh waste continues to be added to the dump. Assembly polls in Haryana will be held on 5 October and the results declared on 8 October.

—PTI

The garbage crisis affects dhaba owners on the highway that rarely get customers, unlike such eateries on other routes ***PHOTO: PTI***

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Sombre mood in Kolkata as rape horror dampens Durga Puja celebrations

Tapas Pal has been making clay idols of various gods and goddesses for the past two decades at Kumartuli, a traditional potters' hub in Kolkata, West Bengal.

The 42-year-old, who makes six-metre high idols from unfired clay, said that he would not normally have any spare time in the two months leading up to Durga Puja, the biggest festival of the state, as he would be on deadline to deliver the idols to the festival organisers.

But the situation this year is completely different, he says, with fewer orders and scaled-down budgets, as the residents of the city are in no mood for festivities after the brutal rape and murder of a 31-year-old woman doctor at the government-run RG Kar Hospital on 9 August.

Durga Puja is a 10-day worship of the Hindu goddess Durga to celebrate her victory over a shape-shifting demon and embodies joy. In the lead-up to the festival, artisans spend months making idols of Durga – shown as a beautiful woman riding a lion or a tiger, with many arms each of which is carrying a weapon used to destroy evil. The idols, often depicting some of this battle, are intricately hand-painted, beautifully dressed in clothes, bejewelled and displayed at the pandals.

The state comes to a standstill in the days leading up to the festivities, which are scheduled to start on 9 October this year. Schools and offices shut down and people pandal hop – a tradition in which people visit multiple venues where the idols are housed to offer prayers and eat prasad – as neighbourhoods compete for the biggest, fanciest idols and decorations.

Last year, state Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee pegged the festival economy to be about USD 10 billion.

But it's not clear if the numbers this year would come even close to that as people are still in shock after a trainee doctor's dead body bearing multiple injuries was found at the government hospital. Hospital authorities initially told her parents that she had died by suicide. But an autopsy revealed she had been raped and murdered.

The police have since arrested Sanjoy Roy, a civic volunteer at the hospital who had unrestricted access to the ward where the doctor worked, and four others including the former principal of the college, Dr Sandeep Ghosh, and a police officer.

So far, Banerjee's request urging people to return to the festivities has failed to yield any results.

Shubhendu Porel, who makes decorative items for Durga Puja, said business has halved with fewer orders as people are in no mood for festivities following the RG Kar incident on 9 August ***PHOTO: AL JAZEERA***

The sombre mood has affected several hundred artisans and entrepreneurs who depend on the festival for their livelihood.

Artisans say the incident could not have come at a worse time as several organisers place orders for idols in the second or third week of August every year and have either scaled those back or paused altogether.

"The incident is unfortunate and condemnable. We demand strict punishment for the perpetrators of the crime and justice for the victim's family. But the timing badly coincided with our peak season that has completely ruined our business, this year," Subhendu Pal, 52, an idol maker at Kumartuli, said.

Subhendu Porel, 35, who makes decorative polystyrene items for pandals, said that business had more than halved.

"There is hardly any enthusiasm among the people for the festival. We usually go to other states during this season to make the decorative items as there is a huge demand for us. But this time, people from other states have not come to take us for their work fearing [the] deteriorating law and order situation here. It seems that the festival is just a formality this year and nothing else," Porel said.

In West Bengal, about 43,000 Durga Pujas are held by community clubs every year, 3,000 of which are held in Kolkata alone. The state government offers 70,000 rupees to the clubs to organise the festival every year, which was increased to 85,000 rupees this year.

But several clubs, rattled by the incident, have declined the grant, in turn limiting their spending capacities.

Apart from state grants, a large part of the costs of the festival are borne by sponsors like local and national businesses in exchange for promotion of their brands. Based on the size of those promised funds, organisers like the clubs commission idols, decorations, food stalls, among other things. Whiff of a weak turnout at the festivities may make some of them withhold or cut back on their promises.

Avishek Bhattacharyya, an executive committee member of Forum for Durgotsab, an umbrella body of more than 600 festival organisers in the state, said that a boycott would be disastrous for the festival.

"The discussions with sponsors ... are done several months in advance. There is no question to roll back as the organisers decide their budget depending on the promised sponsorship. But if the [sponsors] back out now, that would be a major problem for the organisers to clear the fee of the idol makers, decorators and others involved in it. Several people will lose their livelihood," Bhattacharyya warned.

The impact of the protests in light of the gruesome murder and rape of the trainee doctor is also palpable in Kolkata's shopping zones. "A month before the festival, people start buying clothes and other items to avoid (the)last-minute rush. The shops are full with customers and there's no place to keep a toehold. The sales generate massive income for the traders. But the RG Kar incident has devastated us economically," said Maqsood Khan, the secretary of the Shreeram Arcade shop owners association, which has about 250 shops in the market. Every year, Durga Puja also attracts tourists both from other parts of India and abroad. That too has taken a hit this year.

—Courtesy, Al Jazeera

Pak reports another polio case, tally climbs to 22

ISLAMABAD, 28 SEPT

Pakistan has reported another case of polio taking the tally of cases of the infection in the country to 22. The most recent case involved a 30-month-old boy from Pishin, Balochistan, Dawn reported. The National Institute of Health's regional reference laboratory for polio eradication has confirmed that wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1) was present in the child from the Pishin area of Balochistan. "This brings the total number of reported polio cases in 2024 to 22, with Balochistan accounting for 15 of them. Sindh has recorded four cases, while KP, Punjab, and Islamabad have reported one case each," an official of the lab was citied by the publication. *—ANI*

Helicopter crash kills six in northwest Pakistan

PESHAWAR, 28 SEPT

A helicopter crash due to engine failure killed six persons on Saturday in Pakistan's northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province near the Afghan border, officials said. The crash took place in North Waziristan district of the province. There were 14 people on board. The chartered helicopter of an oil field company crashed soon after takeoff due to a technical fault, officials said. At least six persons were killed and eight were injured. The helicopter belonged to the Mari Petroleum Company, they said. Of the 8 injured three are foreign pilots from Russia who have been shifted to Combined Military Hospital Thal. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

FIFA anthem singer K'naan charged with sexual assault

NEW YORK, 28 SEPT

Somali-Canadian rapper K'naan, born Keinan Abdi Warsame, has been accused of s*xually assaulting a 29-year-old woman at a hotel in Quebec City in 2010. The incident happened during the Festival d'été de Quebec, and the victim filed the complaint in May 2022. The chargesheet was filed on September 26, 2024. The complaint was initially filed with Montreal police but was later transferred to Quebec City authorities. According to a report by the Toronto Star from September 26, 2024, the court documents stated that the alleged assault occurred between July 16 and 17 July, 2010. The case was presented in court on Thursday, but the K'naan, currently residing in Brooklyn, New York, did not appear. The upcoming court appearance is set for next year, with a preliminary inquiry to be held in April 2025. *—Agencies*

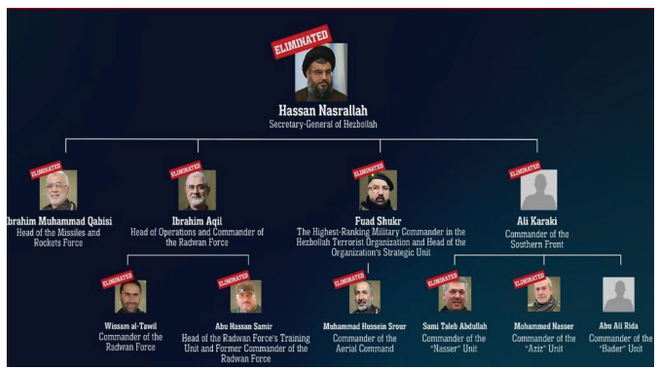
Woman with 2 uteruses gives birth to twins

BEIJING, 28 SEPT

According to a report by the South China Morning Post A Chinese woman given given birth to twins, each from a different uterus in September. This incident took place in China's northwest region. The woman was diagnosed with a rare condition uterus didelphys which occurs in only 0.3 per cent of women globally. Li had two fully formed uteruses, each complete with its own set of ovaries and oviducts. Li's case was even more extraordinary as she delivered twins in natural conception, a boy, and a girl, from both wombs at a hospital in Shaanxi province at eight and a half months pregnant. Cai Ying, a senior obstetrician at the hospital said women with this condition often face challenges during pregnancy, including a heightened risk of miscarriage, preterm birth, and postpartum complications. According to the report, Li gave birth to twins by caesarean section, with the boy weighing 3.3kg and the girl 2.4kg. *—Agencies*

Israel on high alert after Nasrallah killing

According Israel Defence Ministry, Hezbollah launched at least 65 rockets towards North


ELIMINATED
Hassan Nasrallah
Secretary-General of Hezbollah
Ibrahim Muhammad Qabisi
Head of the Missiles and Rockets Force
Ibrahim Aqil
Head of Operations and Commander of the Radwan Force
Fuad Shukr
The Highest-Ranking Military Commander in the Hezbollah Terrorist Organization and Head of the Organization's Strategic Unit
Ali Karaki
Commander of the Southern Front
Wissam al-Tawil
Commander of the Radwan Force
Abu Hassan Samir
Head of the Radwan Force's Training Unit and Former Commander of the Radwan Force
Muhammad Hussein Srour
Commander of the Aerial Command
Sami Taleb Abdullah
Commander of the "Nasser" Unit
Mohammed Nasser
Commander of the "Aziz" Unit
Abu Ali Rida
Commander of the "Bader" Unit

Hezbollah leaders killed by Israel Security Forces ***PHOTO: TIMES OF ISRAEL***

BEIRUT, 28 SEPT

The Israeli military said on Saturday Israel is on high alert for a broader conflict after it claimed to have killed Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah in Beirut, and also said it hoped his reported death will cause the group to change course.

Hezbollah launched some 65 rockets at Israel on Friday night, hours after a major Israel Defence Forces strike in Beirut, believed to have targeted the terror group's chief, Hassan Nasrallah.

A barrage of some 30 rockets was launched at Safed, according to the IDF, saying that at least two impacts in the northern city caused heavy damage.

A 68-year-old woman was lightly wounded as a result of one of the rocket impacts in Safed, according to Magen David Adom medics. The woman sustained trauma from the blast, the medics said. She was being evacuated to hospital.

Reportedly, a house in Safed sustained a direct hit, but no one was injured as the residents had evacuated to the center of the country, amid the ongoing rocket fire from Lebanon. Photos and videos posted to social media showed firefighters at the scene working to control the blaze. IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Herzi Halevi said the military will continue fighting Hezbollah.

The IDF also confirmed that a Ballistic missile fired from Yemen triggered sirens across central Israel. The sirens sounded, including the airport, shortly after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu landed after a trip to the US. *—Times of Israel/PTI*

NASRALLAH, A CLANDESTINE LIFE ON THE RUN

PALESTINE, 28 SEPT

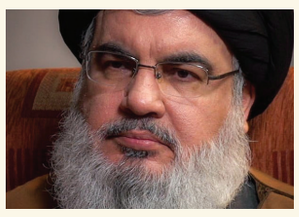
Hassan Nasrallah was largely responsible for expanding Hezbollah (Party of God) from a guerrilla faction into Lebanon's most powerful political force. He led the armed group through decades of conflict with Israel, overseeing its transformation into a force with regional sway and becoming one of the most prominent Arab figures in generations.

He enjoyed cult status among his Shiite Muslim supporters, had a formidable arsenal far bigger and more modern than Lebanon's national army, and dominated Lebanese institutions.

Nasrallah led Hezbollah when its guerrillas finally drove Israeli forces from southern Lebanon in 2000, ending an 18-year occupation.

Supporting Hamas

A gifted public speaker, 64-year-old Nasrallah was a master of cadence, swinging from humour to belittle his enemies to rage to fire up his 1,00,000-man militia. Hezbollah is the only group that refused to give up its weapons after Lebanon's 15-year civil war ended in 1990, and Nasrallah insisted that Israel remained an existential threat.



Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah ***PHOTO: X@SHABBOSK***

Since Hezbollah's Palestinian ally Hamas attacked Israel on 7 October, Hezbollah has battled Israeli troops almost daily along the Lebanon-Israel border.

A clandestine life

Nasrallah led a life in hiding to avoid assassination by his movement's arch-enemy Israel. He was rarely been seen in public since his movement fought a devastating 2006 war with the Jewish state.

In a 2014 interview with Lebanon's pro-Hezbollah newspaper "Al-Akhbar," Nasrallah said that "the Israelis are pushing the idea ... that I live far from people, that I don't see them or communicate with them". He said that he regularly switched sleeping places, but denied that he lived in a bunker.

A divided Lebanon

Born in Beirut's impoverished northern suburb of Burj Hammud on 31 August, 1960, he was one of nine children of a poor grocer hailing from the tiny southern village of Bazuriyeh.

Nasrallah studied politics and the Koran for three years at a seminary in Iraq's Shiite holy city of Najaf, before being expelled in 1978 when the Sunni-dominated government turned on Shiite activists.

—Courtesy, France 24

EUROPE, ARAB NATIONS BAT FOR PALESTINIAN STATE

UNITED NATIONS, 28 SEPT

European, Arab and Islamic nations have launched an initiative to strengthen support for a Palestinian state and its institutions, and prepare for a future after the war in Gaza and escalating conflict in Lebanonsaid Friday.

Espen Barth Eide told The Associated Press that "there is a growing consensus in the international community from Western countries, from Arab countries, from the Global South, that we need to establish a Palestinian Authority, a Palestinian government, a Palestinian state — and the Palestinian state has to be recognized." Eide said many issues need to be addressed, including the security interests of Israel and the Palestinians, recognition and normalization of relations after decades of conflict and the demobilization of Hamas as a military group. Several airlines should avoid Lebanese and Israeli airspace for the coming month, European aviation authorities say, amid intense air strikes and missile fire between Israel and Hezbollah.*—AP/Times of Israel*

Trump vows to resolve Russia war 'very quickly'

WASHINGTON, 28 SEPT

Donald Trump has met President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy in New York in a high-stakes meeting at which the Ukrainian leader hoped to repair ties with the former US president.

The two men met at Trump Tower on Friday amid a growing feud between Zelenskyy and Republicans that Ukraine fears could sabotage further US military aid if Trump wins in November.

"We have a very good relationship, and I also have a very good relationship, as you know, with President Putin," Trump said as he stood next to Zelenskyy before the meeting. "And I think if we win, I think we're going to get it resolved very quickly ... I really think we're going to get it ... but, you know, it takes two to tango."

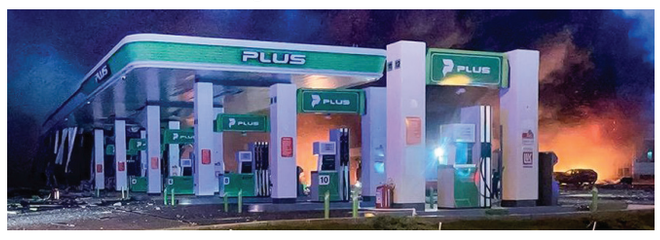
Donald Trump ***PHOTO: PTI***

Going into the meeting, Zelenskyy noted he and Trump last met in person five years ago. "I think we have common view that the war in Ukraine has to be stopped, and Putin can't win, and Ukraine has to prevail," the Ukrainian leader said. "And I want to discuss with you the details of our plan." *—PTI*

Explosion at service station kills 11 in Russia

MOSCOW, 28 SEPT

Local officials said a body was pulled from the rubble Saturday following an explosion at a gas station in Russia's southern region of Dagestan, bringing the death toll to at least 11. The explosion on Friday triggered a fire that tore through the service station and its cafeteria on the outskirts of the regional capital, Makhachkala, said Russia's Emergencies Ministry, adding that two children were among the dead. *—AP*



Smoke and fire rises after an explosion killed multiple people at a gas station in in Russia's Caspian Sea region on Saturday ***PHOTO: PTI***

Kamala visits US border amid immigration row

DOUGLAS, 28 SEPT

Vice President Kamala Harris arrived at Arizona's border with Mexico, making her first visit to the international boundary since becoming the Democratic Presidential nominee as she confronts one of her biggest vulnerabilities ahead of the November election.

Trump and his fellow Republicans have pounded Harris relentlessly over the Biden administration's record on migration and fault the vice president for spending little time visiting the border during her time in the White House.

Harris will outline her plan to crack down further on asylum claims and keep the restrictions in place longer compared to the executive order that Biden signed this summer, according to a campaign official.

Immigration and border security are top issues in Arizona, the only battleground state that borders Mexico and one that contended with a record influx of asylum seekers last year. *—PTI*

PAK BEEFS UP SECURITY MEASURES AHEAD OF PTI PROTEST

ISLAMABAD, 28 SEPT

The Punjab government in Pakistan has beefed up security measures in the garrison city of Rawalpindi on Saturday ahead of a "peaceful protest" by Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf.

PTI founder Khan had given a call for protest in the city, reversing an earlier decision to hold a jalsa (rally) in the historic Liaquat Bagh park of the city, saying that the government would not give permission to hold the rally at the venue and instead provide a place for the gathering away from the city.

The Deputy Commissioners of Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Chakwal and Attock ban all gatherings in the city on Saturday ***PHOTO: DAILYEXCELSIOR***

The deputy commissioners of Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Chakwal and Attock districts requested that the Punjab Home Department ban all gatherings in the city, which imposed Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 in the Rawalpindi region.

The provincial government also deployed paramilitary Rangers and police forces in Rawalpindi, which is the seat of the powerful army. *—PTI*

Chinese firms ink pacts for investment in Pak

BEJING, 28 SEPT

Chinese companies have signed multiple Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with Pakistani counterparts, Dawn reported.

The MoUs were signed at the 'Business Roundtable Conference' held at the Pakistan Embassy in Beijing, as per Dawn.

The agreements, focused on textile, technology, agriculture, and livestock sectors, were finalised at the 'Business Roundtable Conference.'

- The MoUs were signed at the 'Business Roundtable Conference' held at the Pakistan Embassy in Beijing, as per Dawn Newspaper

25 major Chinese companies expressed their interest in investing in agriculture, automobiles, electrical alliances and pharmaceuticals. *—ANI*

Vaccine efforts ramp up in Africa in wake of Mpox

BANGUI, 28 SEPT

Global efforts are continuing to fight the current Mpox outbreak in Africa, where suspected cases have reached over 32,000 — with more than 28,000 of these in the Central Africa region, according to the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC). Officials from the organisation told that the Central Africa region accounts for over 28,000 suspected Mpox cases. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been at the Mpox epicentre where the death toll from the outbreak has now reached at least 840 since the beginning of the year. Kaseya said many countries are recording suspected cases, but the lack of testing means makes it difficult to include those figures in the latest updates on cases. More than $800 million has been pledged for Mpox response, Africa CDC said. *—Courtesy, DW News*

At least 17 people killed in two South African mass shootings

LUSIKISIKI, 28 SEPT

At least 17 people were killed when gunmen targeted two family homes in South Africa, the police said on Saturday, adding to a rising number of mass shootings in the country.

Gunmen opened fire on two homesteads in a township outside Lusikisiki, a town in rural Eastern Cape Province, the police said in a statement. Thirteen people were killed in one house, the police said, adding that all but one of the victims were women.

In another homestead, four people were killed, according to the statement, and another victim is in the hospital in critical condition. The victims were all believed to be relatives and neighbors who had gathered to prepare for a traditional ceremony.

"This is the first time we've witnessed something like this," Lwando Nonkonyana, a spokesman for the local municipality, said in a telephone interview. "And it's a shock to the area." South Africa has for years recorded high rates of violent crime, and the police and experts have noted an increasing number of mass shootings in the past few years. In January 2023, gunmen killed eight people at a birthday party in Gqeberha, In April, gunmen killed 10 people at a homestead. In July 2022, at least 19 people were shot dead in multiple taverns. *—The NYT*

CLIMATE CHAOS

66 people dead in Nepal floods

KATHMANDU, 28 SEPT

Floods caused by incessant rain killed at least 66 people in Nepal, according to a media report on Saturday.

Parts of Nepal have been inundated with rainfall since Friday, prompting disaster authorities to warn of flash floods.

At least 34 people were killed in Kathmandu, 16 in Lalitpur, five in Bhaktapur, three in Kavrepalanchowk, two each in Panchthar and Dhankuta, and one each from Jhapa and Dhading, myrepublica.com reported.

A total of 79 people are missing in the floods.

Police reported that 226 houses have been submerged in Kathmandu and a rescue team of around 3,000 security personnel has been deployed from the Nepal Police in the affected areas. Meanwhile, the Department of Flood Forecasting Division, Nepal, issued a flood alert for various parts of the country, warning people that the water levels of various rivers will continue to rise following heavy rainfall, asking them to exercise caution. Roads and houses across Nepal were severely inundated due to incessant rainfall. *—ANI*

Police reported that 226 houses have been submerged in Kathmandu, on Saturday ***PHOTO: PTI***

Hurricane Helene kills 52 in US

CRAWFORDVILLE, 28 SEPT

Hurricane Helene left an enormous path of destruction across Florida and the entire southeastern US, killing at least 52 people in four states, snapping trees like twigs, tearing apart homes and sending rescue crews on desperate missions to save people from floodwaters.

Georgia Governor Brian Kemp said dozens of people were still trapped in buildings damaged by the Category 4 hurricane.

The storm had maximum sustained winds of 140 mph when it made landfall late Thursday in a sparsely populated region in Florida's rural Big Bend area, home to fishing villages and vacation hideaways where Florida's Panhandle and peninsula meet.

Georgia Governor said dozens of people were trapped in buildings damaged by hurricane ***PHOTO: PTI***

The damage extended hundreds of miles to the north, with flooding as far away as northeast Tennessee, where a "dangerous rescue situation" was unfolding after 54 people were moved to the roof of the Unicoi County Hospital while rapid waters flooded the facility, according to Ballad Health.

Helene's devastation comes as climate change exacerbates conditions that allow such storms to thrive, rapidly intensifying in warming waters and turning into powerful hurricanes and typhoons, sometimes in a matter of hours.

Increasing numbers of deaths also were reported in Georgia and the Carolinas.

Video on social media sites showed sheets of rain coming down and siding coming off buildings in Perry, Florida, near where the storm arrived. *—AP*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Dominance of fossil fuels in electricity to end by 2030

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

Dominance of fossil fuels in electricity generation in India will end by the end of the decade said Reserve Bank of India in its latest report. The report also noted that the renewable energy is expected to cross 50 per cent share in electricity generation globally. It added that the energy transition has accelerated in recent years, with the pace of clean technology deployment and capital investment surging to record levels. It added that the rise of cleaner power generation offers a valuable window to address "hard-to-abate" sectors such as steelmaking and aviation. *—ANI*

NLCIL produces 1,234 crore units of clean power

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

State-owned NLCIL has produced 1,234 crore units of green power, thereby preventing the emission of one crore tonne of carbon dioxide, a coal ministry statement said. Primarily a lignite-based power generating company, NLCIL is targeting 10,000 MW renewable energy capacity by 2030. NLC India Ltd (NLCIL) ventured into renewable energy with 1,380 MW of solar power plants and 51 MW of wind power plants. To achieve the target of 10,000 MW, NLCIL has formed new subsidiaries--NLC India Renewables Ltd (NIRL) to focus on asset monetisation and NLC India Green Energy Ltd (NIGEL) to spearhead clean energy initiatives. With a current renewable energy capacity of 1.4 GW, NLCIL is set to quadruple this figure by 2030. *—PTI*

NHPC inks JV pact to set up RE projects in Andhra

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

State-owned NHPC on Saturday said it has inked a joint venture agreement with APGENCO for implementation of pumped storage hydro power projects and other renewable energy projects in Andhra Pradesh. In first phase, two pumped storage projects (PSPs) - Yaganti (1000 MW) and Rajupalem (800 MW) - are considered for joint implementation. Subsequently, other projects shall be identified in next phase, a company statement said. The agreement was signed between NHPC Chairman & Managing Director RK Chaudhary and APGENCO Managing Director KVN Chakradhar Babu in the presence of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu. This marks a significant step in developing energy storage solutions in Andhra Pradesh, aligning with the national goals of achieving 500 GW of renewable ener and Net Zero by 2070. *—PTI*

Zydus gets USFDA nod to produce prostate cancer drug

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

Zydus Lifesciences on Saturday said it has received approval from the US health regulator to produce generic prostate cancer treatment drug. The company has received approval from the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) to manufacture Enzalutamide capsules (40 mg), it said in a regulatory filing. Enzalutamide capsules are androgen receptor inhibitors indicated for the treatment of patients with metastatic castration-resistant prostate cancer. The drug will be produced at the group's manufacturing site in Moraiya, Ahmedabad, Zydus said. As per IQVIA MAT July 2024 data, Enzalutamide capsules (40 mg) had annual sales of USD 869.4 million in the US. The group now has 400 approvals and has filed over 465 abbreviated new drug applications (ANDAs) since filing process in 2004. *—PTI*

Int'l investments surge record high with ₹23K crore inflows

This inflow brings total FPI for September to ₹57,359 cr

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

Foreign Portfolio Investor (FPI) investment in the Indian stock market surged to record high this week, with net investments totaling Rs 23,659.55 crore, according to data from the National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL).

As per the data, the highest inflow was recorded on Monday, when FPIs pumped Rs 15,181 crore into Indian equities. This strong investment continued throughout the week, with Friday's net investment reaching Rs 8,537 crore, helping push the total weekly net investment past the Rs 23,000 crore mark.

This significant inflow brings the total FPI investment for September to Rs 57,359 crore, marking the highest FPI investment in Indian equities so far this year.

After the US Fed lowered interest rates, the liquidity inflow to Indian markets have increased. The consistent investment by foreign investors highlights growing confidence in India's stock markets, with many seeking to capitalise on strong economic growth and favorable market conditions.

After the US Fed lowered interest rates, the liquidity inflow to Indian markets have increased PHOTO: ANI

The data also highlighted that the investment by the domestic investors also remained strong this week. The domestic institutional investors pumped Rs 15,961.71 crore into Indian stocks which also helped the indices touching new highs this week.

This record-breaking investment is expected to provide further momentum to Indian equities, potentially leading to sustained market growth in the coming months.

This drop is particularly stark when compared to July, where foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) had invested Rs 32,359 crore, according to data from the National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL).

As per the data by NSDL, throughout August, foreign investors were largely net sellers in the Indian equity market. *—ANI*

1/4TH OF INDIA'S INVESTORS HAIL FROM UP, WB: NSE

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

With Indian stock markets touching new highs, people from states like Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and West Bengal are participating in share markets actively, highlighted a latest report by the National Stock Exchange (NSE).

The report highlighted that these three states are now leading in terms of the number of investors actively participating in the stock market, after Maharashtra and Gujarat which are traditional base of investors in country.

Maharashtra continues to lead the country in registered stock market investors, with 1.7 crore investors, making up 16.8 per cent of the total investor base, according to the National Stock Exchange.

The report also revealed an emerging trend, the North and East India region is showing the highest growth. *—PTI*

Govt exempts non-basmati white rice from export duty

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

Withdrawing a blanket ban on overseas shipments of non-basmati white rice, the government on Saturday imposed a floor price of USD 490 per tonne and exempted the commodity from export duty.

Exports of non-basmati white rice have been banned since 20 July, 2023 to boost domestic supply.

"The export policy for non-basmati white rice (semi-milled or wholly milled rice, whether or not polished or gazed) ...is amended from prohibited to free, subject to MEP (minimum export price) of USD 490 per tonne with immediate effect and until further orders," the directorate general of foreign trade (DGFT) said in a notification.

The measures came at a time when the country has ample stock of rice at government godowns and retail prices are also under control.

PHOTO: FREEPIK

In a notification issued on Friday, the revenue department under the finance ministry said it has also reduced export duty on husked (brown rice), and rice in the form of husk (paddy or rough) to 10 per cent.

The country has exported non-basmati white rice worth USD 189 million during April-July this fiscal. It was USD 852.52 million in 2023-24.

Though there was a ban on the exports, the government was allowing the shipments to friendly nations like Maldives, Mauritius, the UAE and African countries. *—PTI*

India's iron ore output rises 7.4% to 116M tonnes

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

The production of iron ore and manganese ore witnessed a growth during the April-August period of the ongoing fiscal.

The output of iron ore rose by 7.4 per cent to 116 million tonnes (MT) during the said period compared to 108 MT registered in the corresponding period of previous fiscal, according to a provisional data released by the mines ministry.

The production of manganese ore jumped by 15.4 per cent to 1.5 MT during the April-August period as compared to 1.3 MT in the previous financial year, the ministry said in a statement.

IIn the non-ferrous metal sector, primary aluminium production rose to 17.49 lakh tonnes (LT) during April-August from 17.26 LT in the year-ago period. *—PTI*

With 23% CAGR, global EV mkt to soar to $2,108B by 2033

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

The global electric vehicle (EV) market, valued at USD 255 billion in 2023, is expected to experience an expansion, projected to reach USD 2,108 billion by 2033, according to an Axis Securities report.

This growth, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 23 per cent from 2024 to 2033, reflects the increasing global demand for sustainable mobility solutions.

Forecasts predict that India's EV market could reach annual volumes of 10 million units by 2033, a substantial increase from the 1.7 million units recorded in FY24.

This transformation will be driven by a combination of favourable government policies, the introduction of new products, declining bill of materials (BoM) costs, and rapid technological advancements.

PHOTO: PTI

India is anticipated to be at the forefront of this EV revolution. Over the next decade, significant EV adoption is expected across key vehicle segments, including three-wheelers (3W), two-wheelers (2W), electric buses, and passenger vehicles.

The segment is expected to grow further as infrastructure improves and more affordable models enter the market.

- Forecasts predict that India's EV market could reach annual volumes of 10 million units by 2033, a substantial increase from the 1.7 million units recorded in FY24

A total of Rs 10,900 crore in subsidies has been allocated over the next two years to promote the adoption of electric two-wheelers, three-wheelers, and buses.

In a bid to make electric vehicles more affordable, the Indian government has also introduced favourable tax rates for EVs. Electric cars are taxed at just 5 per cent, compared to 28 per cent on hybrid vehicles and a steep 49 per cent on internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles. *— ANI*

NBFC, HDB Financial Services prepares for IPO

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

After the mega public issue of Bajaj Housing Finance, another upper layer NBFC, HDB Financial Services has initiated the process to tap the IPO market and is expected to file draft papers soon to meet the RBI's mandatory listing requirements.

HDB Financial Services last week received approval from the board of its parent company, HDFC Bank, to begin the process of going public.

The board approved an initial public offering (IPO) consisting of a fresh issue of shares worth up to Rs 2,500 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) by existing shareholders.

The RBI introduced a revised scale-based regulation (SBR) framework in October 2021 to address systemic risk and strengthen governance. This came against the backdrop of the collapse of IL&FS in 2018, followed by the downfall of DHFL, which had a ripple effect on the entire financial system, particularly causing significant liquidity challenges.

The RBI identified 15 major NBFCs as part of UL under the SBR framework. These are -- LIC Housing Finance, Bajaj Finance, Shriram Finance, Tata Sons, L&T Finance, Indiabulls Housing Finance, Piramal Capital & Housing Finance, Cholamandalam Investment and Finance, Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services, PNB Housing Finance, Tata Capital Financial Services, Aditya Birla Finance, HDB Financial Services, Muthoot Finance, and Bajaj Housing Finance.

Of these, 10 are already listed on stock exchanges with the most recent being Bajaj Housing Finance. *—PTi*

MUTUAL FUND, IPO, BOND

Financial jargons translated to sign language for disabled

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

Key monetary terms such as mutual funds, IPOs, bonds, and investors have been translated into sign language, boosting accessibility and financial inclusion for differently-abled individuals, a senior official has said.

Disability Affairs Secretary Rajesh Aggarwal said the initiative is part of a larger collaboration with the goal to make financial systems more accessible to people with hearing impairment, empowering them to engage fully with financial markets.

"The development of these signs opens up new opportunities for the deaf community to participate in financial systems and services," Aggarwal told PTI.

PHOTO: FREEPIK

The newly developed signs include key terms such as 'mutual fund', 'IPO', 'bond', and 'investor', all accessible through video demonstrations, he said.

The Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC) has developed these signs for various financial and banking terms, with the dictionary now available through a dedicated website and a free application called 'Sign Learn', he added.

The centre has also partnered with other organisations to expand its dictionary.

He said academic terms have been developed with support from NCERT, while STEM vocabulary was created with input from CSIR-IMTECH, Chandigarh.

To enhance accessibility further, Kumar said the Centre launched a free Video Relay Service (VRS) in July 2023, which has so far been utilised by 1,800 individuals across medical, legal, and educational contexts. *—PTI*

₹9K CR PLANT

TN CM MK Stalin with Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran, in Ranipet district, Tamil Nadu, on Saturday PHOTO: PTI

In TN, Stalin lays foundation stone for Tata Motors

RANIPET, 28 SEPT

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin on Saturday laid the foundation stone for Tata Motors' new facility here that would produce sports cars and SUVs.

The auto major's plant, which entails an investment of Rs 9,000 crore would produce next generation vehicles for both Tata Motors and Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), the British arm of the car maker, the company said.

According to Tata Motors, production at the factory is expected to begin in a phased manner and the facility would reach a capacity of 2.50 lakh units a year, over the next five to seven years.

The ground breaking ceremony was held at Panapakkam in this district, about 115 km from Chennai. The facility is expected to generate 5,000 new jobs.

Besides the CM, senior DMK Ministers Durai Murugan, TRB Rajaa, Chief Secretary N Muruganandam, along with Tata Sons Ltd Chairman N Chandrasekaran participated in the ground breaking ceremony.

The plant would cater to both domestic and overseas markets and utilise renewable energy for running the operations.

Stalin expressed joy over Tata Motors' plan to set up the manufacturing facility in TN.

"Tamil Nadu is the first investment destination not only for big companies that operate in India but also for multinational corporations. We are delighted with the presence of Chandrasekaran in this event. Hailing from Namakkal district and leading a globally renowned company, he is a pride for the State," Stalin said.

- The investment of Rs 9,000 crore by Tata Motors is one of the big ticket investments received in Tamil Nadu recently. Earlier, Vietnam-based Vinfast which had committed to invest Rs 16,000 crore for setting up an EV manufacturing facility in the southern district of Tuticorin

Stalin hailed the long-standing relations between Tata Group companies and Tamil Nadu.

The world's largest delivery centre of the IT major Tata Consultancy Services has been operating in Chennai while Taj Group of Hotels (operated by Tata Group) was having wider presence across TN.

The investment of Rs 9,000 crore by Tata Motors is one of the big ticket investments received in Tamil Nadu recently. Earlier, Vietnam-based Vinfast which had committed to invest Rs 16,000 crore for setting up an EV manufacturing facility in the southern district of Tuticorin. —PTI

Quick Commerce sale in India surge by 280%

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

India's quick commerce industry has witnessed remarkable growth, with sales surging by more than 280 per cent over the last two years, according to a report by financial services firm Chryseum.

The report highlighted that the Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) of quick commerce in India increased from USD 0.5 billion in FY22 to a staggering USD 3.3 billion in FY24, which is a 280 per cent increase.

Quick commerce, which refers to the rapid delivery of small orders within a short time frame, is growing at a much faster pace than traditional e-commerce.

The report noted that while India's e-commerce sector is registering an annual growth rate of 14 per cent, quick commerce has expanded at an impressive 73 per cent annual growth rate during FY 2023-24. This highlights the significant shift in consumer behavior towards faster and more convenient delivery options.

The quick commerce market in India is currently valued at USD 3.34 billion in 2024 and is projected to reach USD 9.95 billion by 2029, growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of more than 4.5 per cent over the forecast period (2024-2029).

Furthermore, the tech infrastructure of quick commerce platforms is designed to ensure continuous improvements in operational processes, enhancing agility and speed. *—ANI*

HEALTHCARE COST IN INDIA RISING BY 14%: REPORT

NEW DELHI, 28 SEPT

The healthcare cost in the country rising at an annual rate of 14 per cent, highlighted the ACKO India Health Insurance Index 2024.

The index report noted that each year the healthcare cost in the country is becoming expensive because there is double-digit inflation in healthcare. It said, "Healthcare inflation was reported at 14 per cent in India."

The index also noted 23 per cent of hospital charges in the country are financed through borrowings which puts a significant strain on families'.

With 62 per cent of healthcare expenses paid out of pocket in India, the report stressed the necessity for better health care coverage to protect against unexpected health crises. *—ANI*

Bopanna-Dodig pair out of China Open in first round

BEIJING, 28 SEPT

Indian tennis star Rohan Bopanna and his Croatian partner Ivan Dodig suffered a shock loss to the pair of Francisco Cerundolo and Nicolas Jarry in a first-round match of the China Open ATP 500 tournament here on Saturday. The second-seeded Indo-Croatian pair lost 5-7 6-7 to the unseeded Cerundolo (Argentina) and Jarry (Chile) duo in the round of 16 match that lasted one hour 31 minutes. Bopanna's regular partner Matthew Ebden of Australia chose not to participate in the ATP 500 event. Bopanna has had stints partnering with Dodig in the past in 2017 and 2021 with their best result being reaching the final.—*PTI*

Kiwis on verge of 2nd test defeat against Lankans

GALL, 28 SEPT

New Zealand are teetering on the brink of their heaviest defeat in Tests after being forced to follow on in the second Test against Sri Lanka on Saturday. Following a devastating morning session in Galle where Sri Lanka claimed eight wickets, the tourists were asked to follow on, trailing by a staggering 514 runs. Things only worsened for the Blackcaps, who lost opener Tom Latham before lunch in the second innings. New Zealand still need an improbable 511 runs on a turning Galle pitch just to avoid an innings defeat. New Zealand's worst-ever defeat was by an innings and 324 runs against Pakistan in 2002 and it would appear a record under threat here given the little resistance New Zealand's batters have offered against Sri Lanka's masterful spin attack. Sri Lankan left-arm spinner Prabath Jayasuriya dominated the first innings, taking six wickets for 42 runs, while debutant off-spinner Nishan Peiris was an impressive supporting act, claiming three scalps before dismissing Latham in the second innings. —*AP*

FIFA suspends Arg keeper Martínez in WC QF matches

BUENOS AIRES, 28 SEPT

I Argentina's soccer association said that FIFA suspended goalkeeper Emiliano Martínez for two matches of South American World Cup qualifying in October. The decision rules out the 32-year-old from official games in the round-robin competition against Venezuela and Bolivia on 10 and 15 October. AFA said in a statement that FIFA's disciplinary commission sanctioned Martínez due to incidents in two World Cup qualifying matches against Chile and Colombia earlier this month. The soccer body did not describe which incidents led to the punishment. Martínez made an obscene gesture after his team's 3-0 win against Chile by holding the Copa America trophy close to his genitals. —*AP*

Bihar's 'Gulel', 'gilli danda'to be played in Oct sports fest

PATNA, 28 SEPT

Popular street sports like 'gulel' (slingshot) and 'gilli danda' (tip cat) will be the flavour of a cultural and sports festival being organised by the Bihar government next month.The event 'Tarang: Art and Sports Festival (2023-24), which is being organised by the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), from 21 to 22 October in Patna, aims to provide a platform for children from all over Bihar to showcase their skills in indigenous sports. The SCERT is the apex academic body in the state for school and teacher education and is a wing of the education department.—*PTI*

WADA seeks long ban for world No. 1 Jannik Sinner

WADA said the decision of the tribunal was wrong

BEIJING, 28 SEPT

Jannik Sinner attends a press conference ***PHOTO: X/@THETENNISLETTER***

Top-ranked Jannik Sinner rallied to beat Roman Safiullin 3-6, 6-2, 6-3 in the second round of the China Open on Saturday and learned afterward that his steroid case is far from over.

While Sinner was on court in Beijing, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) announced it was seeking a ban of one to two years for the US Open champion who tested positive twice for an anabolic steroid in March but was not suspended in a decision by an independent tribunal announced by the International Tennis Integrity Agency on 20 August because the ITIA determined he was not to blame.

Sinner's fate will now be determined by the Switzerland-based Court of Arbitration for Sport after WADA said it filed an appeal on Thursday. On court Saturday, the two-time Grand Slam champion again found himself behind in the Chinese capital after Safiullin broke serve twice to claim the opening set.

Sinner's power and laser-like accuracy from the baseline gradually chipped away at his Russian opponent and helped the Italian to win seven straight games from 2-2 in the second set to take the ascendancy and close out a gritty win.

Sinner, who has reached at least the quarterfinals at every tour-level event he has played in 2024, will next play Jiri Lehecka, who earlier defeated Roberto Bautista Agut 3-6, 6-2, 6-1. Also Saturday, Italy's Flavio Cabolli advanced after a 6-4, 6-2 win over Pavel Kotov.

Third-seeded Daniil Medvedev played his second-round match against French veteran Adrian Mannarino later Saturday. In the women's draw, US Open champion Aryna Sabalenka advanced to the third round with a 6-4, 6-1 win over Thai qualifier Mananchaya Sawangkaew.

"In the first set, I was struggling a little bit with the rhythm," said Sabalenka, who's best run in Beijing has only been to the quarterfinals.

Next up for the three-time major winner is American Ashlyn Krueger, who beat New Zealand's Lulu Sun 6-1, 7-6 (4). Third-seeded Jasmine Paolini of Italy rallied from a poor first set to beat Denmark's Clara Tauson 1-6, 7-5, 6-4. Paolini will play Poland's Magda Linette after the 31st-seeded player also needed three sets to progress past Moyuka Uchijima 6-4, 4-6, 6-3. —*AP*

93RD ANNUAL MEETING

Election of BCCI representatives to ICC on AGM agenda

BENGALURU, 28 SEPT

The primary focal point of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)'s 93rd Annual General Meeting, to be held here on Sunday, will be to elect two representatives of India to the International Cricket Council (ICC) meetings, as finding a successor to incumbent secretary Jay Shah is not on agenda.

The meeting assumes importance because the ICC has scheduled a conclave in Dubai at the end of the upcoming Women's T20 World Cup in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The final of the marquee event is slated for 20 October in Dubai, and Shah will still be in the chair of the BCCI secretary on that date, as he will take over as ICC chairman from 1 December.

After the tenure of Sourav Ganguly as BCCI president, usually Shah represented India in the ICC parleys and the last such instance was in Colombo earlier this July.

The current board president Roger Binny is the Alternate Director who can represent BCCI at the global body's meetings, but he seldom performs that duty.

While the selection of the secretary is not listed, the members, who have assembled here also for the inauguration of the new National Cricket Academy complex near the international airport on Saturday, are certain to discuss among themselves the possible candidate to succeed Shah.

As things stand now, two names have been doing rounds for the post – Anil Patel, the secretary of Gujarat Cricket Association and Rohan Jaitley, son of late Arun Jaitley and the president of the Delhi and District Cricket Association. —*PTI*

RAIN WASHES OUT 2ND DAY

The second day of the second Test between India and Bangladesh was on Saturday called off without a ball being bowled due to persistent downpour, at Green Park Stadium in Kanpur on Saturday. As conditions did not improve, the second day's play was called off officially at 2.15pm. As per the weather forecast, the city is expected to receive rain even on Sunday but Monday and Tuesday are likely to be sunny and warm. In that scenario, the match seems to be headed for a draw ***PHOTO: PTI***

PSG extends unbeaten run with 3-1 win over Rennes

PARIS, 28 SEPT

Bradley Barcola scored one goal in each half and Lee Kang-in added a third as Paris Saint-Germain beat Rennes 3-1 to extend its unbeaten run in the French league.

Barcola took a pass from Ousmane Dembélé after half an hour on Friday and steered a right-foot shot inside the far post.

Lee got his third goal of the season to double the home side's advantage 12 minutes into the second half and Barcola added his second with a simple tap in after 68 minutes. Arnaud Kalimuendo scored a consolation goal for Rennes from the penalty spot.

Rennes had a second goal chalked off by VAR with two minutes to end any hopes of a comeback.

Barcola's fifth and sixth goals of the season take him to the top of the Ligue 1 scoring charts, one clear of Marseille's Mason Greenwood. PSG has 16 points from its first six games.

Bradley Barcola ***PHOTO:X/@PSG***

Marseille is also unbeaten and has 13 points from five games. The south coast club plays at Strasbourg on Sunday. —*PTI*

Guirassy double lead Dortmund to derby victory

DORTMUND, 28 SEPT

Serhou Guirassy scored twice and won a penalty as Borussia Dortmund overturned a two-goal deficit to beat local rival Bochum 4-2 in the Bundesliga ahead of facing Celtic in the Champions League next week.Dortmund had been demolished 5-1 by Stuttgart last week and the pressure on new coach Nuri Sahin seemed to be mounting when his team conceded two early goals against Bochum. —*PTI*

Bagnaia wins sprint after Martin crashes

JAKARTA, 28 SEPT

PHOTO: X/@DUCATICORSE

Francesco Bagnaia led a factory Ducati 1-2 in the MotoGP Indonesian Grand Prix sprint after championship leader Jorge Martin crashed out of the lead on the first lap, at Mandalika International Street Circuit in Indonesia.

Having dominated qualifying to take pole, Pramac rider Martin's practice pace suggested he could break away from the field in the 13-lap sprint. Taking the lead off the line and getting his advantage up to over four tenths across the opening lap, Martin slid off his GP24 at the penultimate corner.

This released Bagnaia, who had moved up to second from fourth, into a lead he would defend through to the chequered flag for his fifth sprint win of 2024. Martin remounted but finished out of the points in 10th.

His championship lead is now down to just 12 points, with Bagnaia cutting it in half on Saturday.

The podium was completed by Enea Bastianini and Marc Marquez. Off the line on the opening lap, Martin came under no pressure into Turn 1 as Bagnaia carved his way down the outside of the riders ahead to move into second having started fourth. Behind, Gresini rider Marc Marquez - having crashed twice in Q2 - jumped up from 12th to fifth, with that becoming fourth when Martin crashed out of the lead at Turn 16 at the end of the first lap.

—*Courtesy, Crash.Net*

India U17 enter SAFF final

THIMPHU, 28 SEPT

Indian players celebrate after scoring second goal against Nepal in Thimpu, on Saurday ***PHOTO: X/@IFTWC***

India beat Nepal 4-2 in a high-octane match to progress to the final of the 2024 SAFF U17 Championship at the Changlimithang Stadium here on Saturday.

After a goalless first half, India scored through Vishal Yadav (61st and 68th minutes), Rishi Singh (85th) and Hemneichung Lunkim (90+5), while Subash Bam (81st) and an own goal by India's Mohammed Kaif (89th) allowed Nepal to reduce the margin.

In the title clash to be played on Monday, India await the winners of the second semifinal between Pakistan and Bangladesh. The first half was devoid of too many clear chances as teams were cautious committing too many numbers forward, and sizing each other up.

India's midfielders were the ones who held more of the possession but found it tough to break down Nepal's defence. India got the first chance in the 12th minute, when a defensive mix-up within the Nepal box saw the ball fall to Md Arbash on the left wing. Spotting the goalkeeper off his line, Arbash took a first-timer from a tight angle and distance, but it flew high and wide.

In the 38th minute, a cross from Bharat Lairenjam dropped perfectly into a dangerous area, begging to be put into goal. An onrushing Arbash dove in a vain attempt to get his head to it and then so did Samson Ahongshangbam behind him, but to no avail.

—*PTI*

AFC U20 Qualifiers: India face Laos in must-win game

VIENTIANE, 28 SEPT

Smarting from a heartbreaking loss to Iran, the Indian team faces hosts Laos in a must-win game in the AFC U20 Asian Cup Qualifiers here on Sunday, in order to make it to the main tournament.

The last time they played in the AFC U20 Asian Cup final rounds (formerly known as the AFC Youth Championship and the AFC U19 Championship) was back in 2006 when they hosted the tournament.

A team would have to go even further back – to 2004 when Turkmenistan's withdrawal from the tournament meant that India, who had finished second in qualification Group H, got the chance to compete, or back to 2002, when they topped their qualifying group to make it to the final rounds. India are also the former champions of the Asian Youth Championship; they shared the trophy with Iran in Bangkok in 1974 after a 2-2 stalemate in the final. But much water has flown under the bridge since then. —*PTI*

PRESIDENTS CUP

Int'l Team brilliantly fights back to tie US 5-5

MONTREAL, 28 SEPT

Sahith Theegala and Collin Morikawa suffer a big defeat ***PHOTOS: X***

Sahith Theegala and partner Collin Morikawa suffered a big defeat in their second match as the International Team fought back brilliantly with a 5-0 sweep to tie United States 5-5 in the Presidents Cup.

Theegala and Morikawa were outplayed 5 and 4 by Australian veteran Adam Scott and Taylor Pendrith. Scott made more history by earning his 22nd point in what was an unprecedented 11th International Team appearance.

A day after the US Team won all five Four-ball matches, the International Team won all five matches, the first time in Presidents Cup history with multiple session sweeps. Hideki Matsuyama and Sungjae Im sparked a stunning International Team fightback with a record-tying 7 & 6 rout over Patrick Cantlay and Xander Schauffele in the first match of Friday's Foursomes session before Si Woo Kim and Byeong Hun An put the bow on a 5-0 reversal over the star-studded US. Team to leave the Presidents Cup all tied at 5-5 at Royal Montreal golf course on Friday.

Following the American demolition job in Thursday's Four-ball session where the title holders won all five matches, Mike Weir's International Team showed up in full force to put life back into the biennial team competition.

Canadian stars Corey Conners and Mackenzie Hughes also enjoyed a 6 & 5 win over Wyndham Clark and Tony Finau while Jason Day and Christiaan Bezuidenhout edged out Max Homa and Brian Harman 1-up as the International Team brilliantly bounced back from Thursday's setback as they chase only a second Presidents Cup victory. Matsuyama, a 10-time PGA TOUR winner, and Im dovetailed brilliantly in the alternate-shot format as they closed out Cantlay and Schauffele, who until Friday, was undefeated as a pair in Foursomes at the event. —*PTI*

ISL: NorthEast aims to rebound against Kerala

GUWAHATI, 28 SEPT

PHOTO: ISL

NorthEast United FC will look to bounce back from their recent defeat as they host Kerala Blasters FC in the Indian Super League at the Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium on Sunday.

The Highlanders secured a 1-0 victory in their season opener against Mohammedan FC but faced a setback with a 2-3 loss to Mohun Bagan Super Giant in their last match. In contrast, Kerala Blasters come into this fixture after a 2-1 win over East Bengal FC.

In their previous 20 encounters in the ISL, NorthEast United has won five matches, while Kerala Blasters have emerged victorious eight times, with seven matches ending in a draw.

NorthEast United has previously kept clean sheets at home, with a 3-0 win over Odisha FC and a 2-0 victory against Kerala Blasters.

They have never managed to achieve three consecutive clean sheets at home in the ISL, making this an important opportunity for the hosts. "My team needs to improve in many areas, from all the areas, we need to keep working, now we have another final (against KBFC) we will think about the next game." —*PTI*